



A ROMAN LADY IN FULL DRESS

*Frontispiece.*

# THE PROGRESS TO HISTORY

EDITED BY

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STAGE III

DECISIVE DAYS IN BRITISH HISTORY

MACMILLAN AND CO, LIMITED  
ST MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1916

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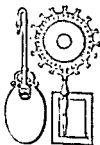
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# A LIST OF OUR RULERS FROM THE TIME OF WILLIAM I.

---

WILLIAM I. ( <i>the Conqueror</i> )	HENRY VIII.
WILLIAM II. ( <i>Rufus</i> )	MARY I.
HENRY I.	EDWARD VI.
STEPHEN.	ELIZABETH.
HENRY II.	
RICHARD I. ( <i>the Lion Heart</i> )	JAMES I.
JOHN ( <i>Lackland</i> )	CHARLES I.
HENRY III.	OLIVER CROMWELL.
EDWARD I. ( <i>Longshanks</i> )	CHARLES II.
EDWARD II. ( <i>of Carnarvon</i> )	JAMES II.
EDWARD III.	WILLIAM III. and MARY II.
RICHARD II.	ANNE.
HENRY IV.	GEORGE I.
HENRY V.	GEORGE II.
HENRY VI.	GEORGE III.
EDWARD IV.	GEORGE IV.
EDWARD V.	WILLIAM IV.
RICHARD III ( <i>Crookback</i> )	VICTORIA.
HENRY VII.	EDWARD VII.
GEORGE V. ( <i>whom God preserve</i> )	



ROMAN MIRRORS AND LAMPS.

*Library No 106 E.*

# PROGRESS TO HISTORY

## STAGE III

### DECISIVE DAYS

THE story of our country is a very long one, for it covers no less than two thousand years. I do not need to tell you that the whole of this story cannot be told in this book.

Now, in the story of any person's life there are special days which stand out from among the rest. Take, for example, the story of your own life; for you have a life-story of your own though it may never be written down.

I am sure that you can look back and recall certain days which were different from all the others. There was the first day at school, when you felt either very important



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or very unhappy. But, whichever it was, this was a day to be remembered.

Then there was the day when your pet dog or rabbit, or perhaps it was a guinea-pig, came to you. In the case of one boy I know, it was a black rabbit which came in a basket brought by a special messenger; and this boy remembers every incident of that day as if it were carved in stone.

The day when you moved from one house or one town to another also stands out very clearly; and you often recall in conversation the events of that day. And so I might go on, but you know better than I do which days of your life were special days.

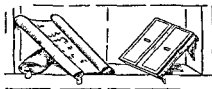
Now the history of our country is the story of a nation's life; and there are certain days in that story which stand out before all the rest. I choose to call these "decisive days," and when you come to the end of this book, I hope you will know better than you do now what this phrase means.

Some of these decisive days in our

country's story were days of battle; some of them, as you will see, were marked by landings upon our shores. Others again were peaceful days, when some great event took place which, when we look back upon it, seems to have changed the whole course of our national story.

In reading the stories which follow, I want you to get into the habit of asking yourselves, "How long ago did this happen? What led up to it? What was the result of it?"

Then you will form the habit of seeing that these decisive days had a great deal to do with the quiet days which went before them and those which followed after them.



ROMAN READING-ROLL AND TABLET

## FINE GENTLEMEN AND SAVAGES

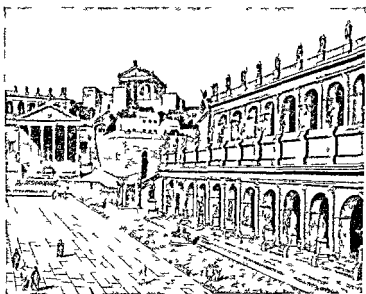
I WANT you to look carefully at the picture on the next page. It shows part of the city of Rome as it was nearly nineteen hundred years ago. At this time the people of our own country were little better than savages.

Here are some very fine buildings indeed, as fine as any which can be seen in London or any of our great cities at the present day.

To the left you can see part of a government office like those in London, and below it a Temple of Peace with a kind of pulpit at the front from which speeches were made.

High up against the sky is another fine temple with a fortress round it, while below this again is a prison which you can easily pick out because it has no windows.

At the right of the picture is a kind of palace, with beautiful arches, covered walks, marble steps, and fine statues. You can see some of the Romans walking about in the broad street before this palace.



The picture gives us the idea that the people of Rome at this time were very clever indeed. They thought themselves fine gentlemen, and when they told stories of the people of our own island they spoke of them as "barbarians," that is to say, savages.

They had troops of very brave soldiers and many clever generals like the one in our second picture, and one of the most



A ROMAN GENERAL

famous of these Roman generals was a man named Julius Caesar. This great soldier wrote a book, which tells about the battles which he fought for Rome in the land we now call France.

When he had beaten the people of that country, he began to find out all he could

about Britain, as our island was then called by the Romans. And he writes in his book

“The greater part of those in the country never sow their lands, but live on flesh and milk, and go clad in skins. All the Britons paint themselves with woad, which gives a bluish cast to the skin and makes them look dreadful in battle. They are long haired and shave all except the upper lip.

Another writer of a little later time says of the Britons, ‘ Their strength is in their foot-soldiers. Some tribes fight also with the chariot. They were once ruled by kings, but are now divided under chiefs into tribes. Our greatest strength in fighting them is that they do not act together.

Now I think you will agree with me that the day on which the soldiers of Rome came across to Britain was a decisive day in our history. This day fell about fifty-five years before Christ was born in Bethlehem.

Caesar took over some of his bravest men and expected to have an easy task in

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subduing the Britons. When he drew near to the coast of Kent, he found the shore full of wild warriors ready to fight. Many of these men came into the water to prevent the Romans from landing, but they were driven back.

When the Roman general had landed, he found that the Britons were going to be enemies well worth fighting. And as the autumn storms were coming on, he made up his mind to go away again and to come back in the following year.

He did so, and this time he marched into the country as far as the place where the Cathedral city of St. Albans now stands. Here he found a great village of wooden huts, and the Britons fought against him with great courage. But they were no match for his trained soldiers, and he not only beat them but burnt their homes.

Many of the chiefs round about now came and promised to take the Romans as their masters ; but Caesar could not stay to make



A ROMAN EATING HOUSE.

(From a painting on the walls of a house in Pompeii.)



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Britain a Roman country, and he sailed away with a few prisoners. He went to Rome not long afterwards and became the chief man there for a time; but his enemies stabbed him to death.

You may ask why I call the day of Caesar's first landing a decisive day in our history, seeing that he went away before long without having done anything of real importance. For after he had gone the Romans left the Britons alone for hundreds of years.

Well, you see, he was one of those brave men in history who lead the way for others to follow. After he had found his way here and had taught the people respect for the Romans, a number of Roman traders came to our island and did a great deal of business with the Britons of the south, who began to live in a manner that was not quite so rough and rude.

We hear, too, of British chiefs going all the way to Rome to ask the help of the Roman soldiers against other British chiefs with

whom they had quarrelled. In time the Roman soldiers did come to our island, but not to help one British chief against his brothers.

They came to conquer Britain and to make it what was called a Roman "province." There was much *fierce fighting* before this was done, but in the end the Romans won; and they built the great Roman wall from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway to keep back the wild tribes, called the Picts, who lived in the land now known as Scotland.

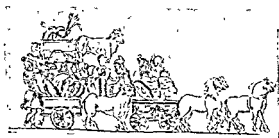
After this the Romans were masters of Britain for about three hundred and fifty years, and they forced all the tribes to live at peace with each other. They made many good paved roads from one end of the land to the other.

They built bridges across the rivers and set up many strong cities with walls round about them, such as York, and Chester, and Colchester. The Roman troops lived in these cities and other places like them, ready

to go anywhere at a moment's notice to keep the peace or to teach some tribe to obey the Roman law.

The Britons, as you might expect, became less and less warlike, and learnt to live in cities and to think chiefly of their own comfort. This was a bad thing for the Britons, as you will shortly see; for the time came when the Romans had to leave them to look after themselves.

They went back to Rome to defend that city from her enemies, and when the next warlike visitors came to Britain, they had little trouble in gaining a footing. We shall see who these visitors were in our next chapter.



A ROMAN BAGGAGE TRAIN.

THE COMING OF THE  
SEA-WOLVES

WHEN you come to the end of this book, you will find that many of the most decisive days of our history have been days on which *landings* have been made upon our shores.

We have already read of one of these landings, that of Julius Caesar; and now we are to read of another which was even more important in our history.

The Romans left our island to go back to Rome, in order to protect their city against some wild tribes who came from the lands to the north of Italy.

If you look at a map of Europe and find out Germany, you will get a general idea where these wild tribes had their homes. The Romans knew of them long before they had to defend Rome against them, and one of their clever men wrote a book about them.

Let us read a little of what he says about

these tribes, for among them were the first English people.

"All have fierce blue eyes," he writes, "fair hair, and huge bodies; heat they cannot in the least endure; to cold and hunger their climate and their soil harden them.

"In battle they carry a spear with a narrow and short head. The horse-soldier has a shield and a spear; the foot-soldiers scatter showers of missiles, hurling them to a great distance. There is no display about their battle array; their shields alone are marked with choice colours.

"To give up your shield is with them the basest of crimes; nor may a man thus disgraced show himself again among the others. Their kings have not full power. If they fight in the front, they become leaders because they are admired.

"In battle a separate squadron is composed of a family or clan. Close by them as they fight are those dearest to them; so that they hear the cries of their women and children.

The soldier brings his wounds to mother and wife, who do not shrink from counting them, and then they give food and praise to the fighter.

"They have no cities and do not like their houses to be close together. They live scattered and apart, just as a meadow, a spring, or wood has attracted them. When they are not fighting, they pass much of their time in the chase.

"A liquor for drinking is made out of barley. Their food is of a simple kind, consisting of wild fruit, fresh game, and curdled milk. In quenching their thirst they are not moderate.

"Strangely enough they make gambling a serious occupation even when sober; and when a man has lost all he has he will even stake his own freedom, and on losing become the slave of the winner."

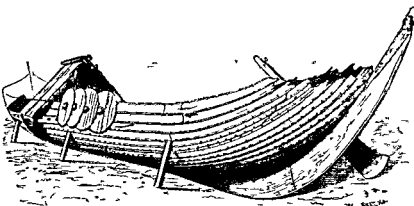
Now can you find out before going further, any likenesses between the first English and those of to-day?

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These tribes of Germany fought with the Romans and, of course, were beaten by them ; but the Romans did not come and live among them as their masters, as they did in Britain. And when the Romans grew so wealthy and comfortable that they also grew weak, the chance of the Germans came ; and they took it.

Some of them swept down upon Rome itself, as I have already said ; and others, who lived on the coast, built ships and became sea-robbers or pirates. These men sailed along the shores of the North Sea, and when they came to a creek or river-mouth, they sailed inland and went on shore, if they saw a town or village which promised plunder. Then they killed the people, robbed their houses, and sailed away.

"Foes are they," said a Roman writer, "fierce beyond other foes, and cunning as they are fierce ; the sea is their school of war, and the storm their friend ; they are sea-wolves that live on the plunder of the world."



A VIKING SHIP

This is not quite correct, however, for these people were really looking for homes where they might settle and live the life which they had lived in their own land. I think that what they wanted was a new home not quite so cold and misty as the lands on the other side of the North Sea

In due time they found such a home.

No one knows exactly how the first English came to this country, but an old story about them runs as follows:

A certain British chieftain who lived in Kent was greatly worried by wild tribes from



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the north and asked some of the "sea-wolves," who were cruising off the east coast of our island, to come to his help.

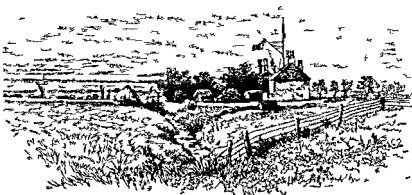
They did not need much pressing, and the story goes that two of their chiefs named Hengist and Horsa landed "from three long ships" at Ebbsfleet on the shores of the Isle of Thanet. And on that day, nearly fifteen hundred years ago, English history began!

"Then they fought with the foe," the old story goes on, "who had come from the north, and won the victory. And this was told to those whom they had left at home, and that the new land was very fertile, and its people very weak. Then more ships were sent over bringing more men.

"The Britons then gave to the newcomers a place to live in, and money to help them against their foes."

It is easy to see what would follow. More and more bands of the sea-wolves or vikings came over, and little by little the whole land passed into their hands.

The Britons were driven into the mountains of the West, and in due time the new land was known as Angle-land or England, because the Angles were one of the most powerful of the tribes that came over from Germany



PIBSFLEET—THE PLACE WHERE THE FIRST ENGLISH ARE SUPPOSED TO  
HAVE LANDED

No spot in Britain can be so sacred to Englishmen as that which first felt  
the tread of English feet —J. R. GREEN

## THE LANDING OF AUGUSTINE

THE first English who came to this country were heathens, who worshipped the sun and



*The Hammer of Thor or  
Thor, the god of rain  
and storm.*

moon and the thunderstorm. Most of them thought that fighting and feasting were the best things that life could afford.

But in time they learnt to some extent to love mercy and to follow peace, as Christ taught us to do. And I am going to tell you in this chapter how this great change came about.

We must go back to that pretty story about the slave boys in the market-place at Rome. I have already told it,<sup>1</sup> but it is worth recalling again here.

One day a young priest named Gregory was walking through the market-place in the city of Rome. He stopped beside a

<sup>1</sup> See *The Progress to History*, Stage I. p. 68.

group of men who were looking at some pretty slave boys that were to be sold to the highest bidder

The boys had fair skins and ruddy faces, while their bright curling hair shone like gold in the sunshine. The good priest turned to one who stood near and asked who the children were

"They are Angles," was the reply. "Not Angles but angels, he said, "with faces so angel-like! From what country come they?"

"They come," said the slave merchants, "from Deira," naming one of the parts into which England was then divided

Now if we divide this name into two parts, *De* and *ira*, we have two Latin words which mean "from anger"

"*De ira?*" said the good priest, "yes, plucked *from* God's *anger* and called to Christ's mercy! And what is the name of their king?" "*Ælla*," they told him. The good priest smiled gently as he said.

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"Alleluia shall be sung in that land." Then he passed on, thinking deeply. And without wasting any time he went to the Pope and asked leave to go and teach the English about God and Christ.

He was given leave, and with a small band of priests he set out from Rome in secret; for he knew that the people of Rome liked him so well that they would try to prevent him from leaving the city.

He had travelled three days along the road which leads to the north when he and his companions halted as usual to rest at noon. They were lying down in a meadow, and Gregory was reading, when, all at once, a locust leapt upon his book and sat quite still upon the page.

"Rightly is it called *locusta*," said Gregory, "because it seems to say to us, '*loco sta*,' that is, 'stay in your place.' I see that we shall not be able to finish our journey. But rise and let us get on as far as we can."

While they were talking, messengers on



ST AUGUSTINE LEAVING ROME FOR ENGLAND

tired horses bathed in sweat came galloping up to call Gregory back to Rome. The people of the city had made a riot because the good priest had been allowed to go away, and the Pope had been forced to call him back.

So he went back, and in a short time he was himself made Pope; and as he was now the head of the Church, he took steps to send the message of the Gospel to the English.

He chose a priest named Augustine, and sent him with a band of forty monks to England. The journey was long and rough,

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## 32      The Progress to History

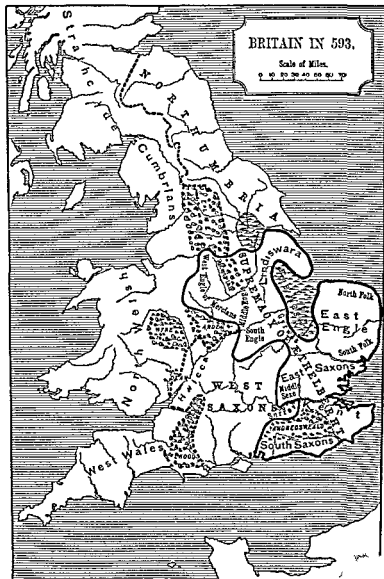
and as they passed through France, they heard such tales of the fierceness of the English that their hearts failed them; and they sent a message to Rome asking to be excused.

But Gregory would not allow them to turn back, and they went on across the Channel and landed on the north coast of Kent.

Now the King of Kent was named Æthelberht, and he had married a French Princess named Bertha, who was a Christian. Gregory had heard of the goodness of this Princess and had advised Augustine to land in her husband's kingdom.

But the heathen king was a little afraid of witchcraft. He would meet and talk with the new-comers, but it must be in the open air and not under a roof where he would not feel safe. So the meeting took place, it is said, under a great oak in the middle of the Isle of Thanet.

This was in the year 597, that is, more than 1300 years ago; but of the exact day of the meeting I am not certain. It must,



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however, have been summer-time, for a reason which I shall leave you to guess.

You wish, no doubt, that you could have seen that meeting upon which so much was to depend. The tall Saxon king with his wild soldiers around him was seated on the ground beneath the oak. Then Augustine came up from the shore with his companions, one man carrying a large silver cross, and another a picture of Christ, painted and gilded, on an upright board.

The monks chanted a kind of prayer as they came towards the king; and as soon as they drew near to the place where he sat, he motioned for them to be seated. So they sat down, and the talk began.

Augustine did not know the king's language, and the king did not know Latin—the language of the monks; so the two chief men at that fateful meeting had to talk to each other by means of an interpreter.

Augustine spoke for a long time trying to make clear to these rough fighting men what

it would mean to take service with Christ, the Prince of Peace. As he spoke, the interpreter turned his words into English, and when the sermon was ended, there was silence to hear the king's reply.

Surely the angels who sang at Bethlehem of "peace on earth, good-will towards men," bent down to listen at that moment!

"Your words are fair," he said quietly, "but they are new to me, and I cannot at once leave the faith of my fathers. But because you are strangers and have come from a long distance, we will give you all that is needed for your support, nor do we hinder you from joining all whom you can to your faith."

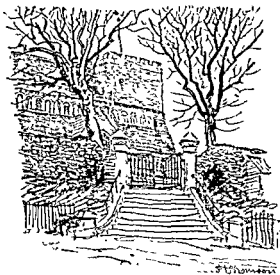
The band of monks then crossed the Stour and marched to Canterbury, singing the words

'We beseech Thee O Lord, in all Thy mercy, that Thy wrath and anger may be removed from this city, and from Thy holy house.' And then was heard the cry, 'Alleluia' the sacred word which Gregory

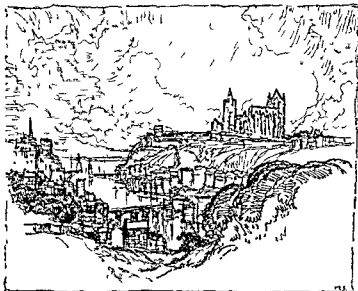
## 36 The Progress to History

had used in the market-place of Rome as he looked at the fair English boys.

In due time Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. And at a later date a priest named Paulinus went from the court of Æthelberht, now a Christian king, to teach the English of the north about the faith of Christ.



ST. MARTIN'S, CANTERBURY, THE OLDEST CHURCH IN ENGLAND.



## THE FIRST ENGLISH WRITERS

ONE summer day (I like to take my "history trips" in the summer) I went to Whitby, which stands on the northern part of the coast of Yorkshire.

Now I wished to see Whitby for two reasons ; in the first place it was the birth-place of English poetry, and it was the place where Captain Cook, who explored part of Australia, stayed as a boy.

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I will tell you here the story of the first English poet; and in a later book I will tell you something about Captain Cook.

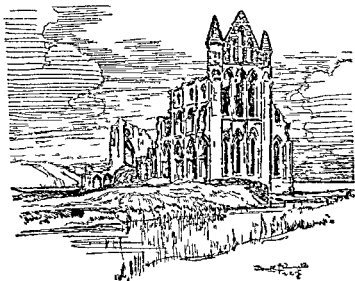
On the top of the cliff above the port of Whitby are the ruins of an old church; and not far away there is a beautiful stone cross which is quite new.

At the foot of this cross are carved the words: "To the glory of God, in memory of Caedmon, the father of English song. Fell asleep hard by, 680."

A little exercise in subtraction will show you how long ago "English song" was born. It was really a "decisive day" in our history, although it was a day of peace. For we are all proud of our English poetry.

In those early days there were several English kings who ruled over different parts of our island; and the king in the north of England built a wooden home for monks and nuns on the great cliff above Whitby town.

At the head of this "abbey" he placed a very good woman, who was known as the



Lady Hilda Many tales were told of the holy life of the abbess "She is so good," some said, "that the snakes are changed into coils of stone when she kneels to pray, and even the sea-fowl, flying over the cliff, come and bow themselves at her feet"

Now among the servants of the Lady Hilda was an old man whose name was Caedmon He was very shy and quiet; and when his companions met at a feast he took no part in the story-telling to the harp which



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was part of their usual entertainment. When he saw the harp coming towards him, he would get up and go away to his bed.

One night he left the feast in this way and went to the stable, for he had charge of the cattle, and lay down to rest.

As he slept, he saw in a vision an angel who called him by his name and said to him, "Sing, Caedmon, some song to me." "I cannot sing," he said, "and for this cause I left the feast and came here."

"However that may be," was the answer, "you shall sing to me." "What shall I sing?" asked Caedmon. "Sing the beginning of created things," said the angel, and then he vanished.

Next morning the cowherd went to the abbess and told his story. She listened with great care and then said over to him a passage from the Bible telling him, if he could, to put the words into verse.

On the following day he came to her again

and recited the words which appear on the cross which I saw at Whitby

Now must we praise  
The Guardian of heaven's realm,  
The Creator's might,  
And His mind's thought  
The glorious works of the Father,  
How, of every wonder,  
He, the Lord Eternal,  
Laid the foundation

After this the abbess took Cædmon from his rough farm work, and he was made a monk. She also gave orders that he was to be taught the chief of the Bible stories, and he turned them all into sweetest verse

"He sang of the beginning of the world," the old story tells us, "of the fall of man, and



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all the story of Israel ; of the birth, life, death, and rising again of Christ, and of His going up into Heaven."

Our first poetry, then, was sacred poetry ; and the first of our poets was a farm labourer and then a monk. Our first writer of prose was also a monk whose name was Bede ; and he belonged to the North Country also.

He was a monk of Jarrow and lived all his life in the monastery of that town which is now famous for its warships. He tells us in his book that his constant pleasure was in learning, or teaching, or writing.

What did he write? He wrote the first part of the story of the English nation, and nearly all that we know of the time that follows the days of Augustine, we learn from his book. It is true that he mixes up stories like fairy tales with sober history ; but even these help us to understand what kind of people the first English really were.

It is he who tells the story of the English boys in the market-place at Rome ; and the

old tale of Caedmon which I have just told you is also drawn from his book

When he came near the end of his long life, he was hard at work on a version of St John's Gospel into English. He was weary unto death, but still he toiled on. His friends begged him to rest, but he said with a smile, "I do not want my boys to read a lie after I am gone

"Learn with what speed you may," he said to his pupils, "for I know not how long I may last

The next day he was weaker. "There is still one chapter wanting," said the youth who was writing to his dictation, "and it is very hard for thee to trouble thyself further." "It is easily done," said the aged scholar, "take thy pen and write quickly

They worked quietly all day, and towards evening the youth said, "There is one sentence unwritten, dear master." "Write it quickly," said the dying man.

"It is finished now," said the boy at last

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"You speak truth," said the master, "all is finished now."

They laid him down upon the pavement with his head in the arms of one of his scholars. Then, turning his face towards the place where he used to pray, he softly chanted the "Gloria." And as his voice reached the close of the holy song, he passed quietly away.

### THE GREAT LEADERS

#### I

IF we glance down a list of our kings and queens, we find that some of them were given extra names in addition to those by which they would be known to their mothers. Some of these are titles of honour, while others are more like nick-names, that is to say, "extra" names.

One of the early kings was called "Ironsides," because of his bravery in war; another was known as "the Unready," because he was not very wise; a third was called "the

Confessor," because he was more like a monk than a king

Then we have William I, who is always spoken of as "the Conqueror", Richard I, who was so brave that he was known as the 'Lion Heart', Edward I, whose extra name was Longshanks, and so on

But certain other rulers in history are always spoken of as "the Great," which you will, no doubt, think the most honourable of all titles

What was it, I wonder, which made people give such a name to just a few rulers in history? What would you expect a king to be like, before you would think him worthy of this title?

Big and strong? Some of the greatest men in history have been very small, and by no means strong in body

Brave? Yes, by all means, especially brave enough to conquer fear. Yet there have been many brave kings to whom history has not given the title of "the Great"

## 46 The Progress to History

Clever? Yes, this is necessary, but there have been many clever kings who were by no means great.

For myself, I find that all the rulers who have won this honourable title in history have spent their lives in working for the good of their people.

They have none of them been perfect, but no ruler ever won the title of "the Great" who did not work to leave his people better than he found them.

### II

One of the best examples of a king who was truly great was our own King Alfred; and we may look upon the day when he came to the throne as one of the most decisive days in our history.

It is more than one thousand years since he was chosen to be king—"against his will," we read, "for he did not think that it was within his power to stand against such great fierceness of the heathen."

You already know *something* about him—how bravely he fought the Danes and did not lose heart when he was beaten at first; how he was often sick, but would not allow that to stop his work; how he burnt the cakes, and went disguised as a harper into the camp of the Danes.

But you are now old enough to understand a little more of his work as a ruler.

He had fought the Danes with great bravery, and had beaten them too; but we must never forget that he was really a man of peace, and as soon as the fighting was over he settled down to give his people the blessings of good government and education.

He ruled that part of England which lies to the west of a line drawn from London to Chester. It will be easy for you to mark this on a map. He did not trouble about trying to conquer the rest of the country, for he had much more important work in hand.

The war with the Danes had made great disorder in the country, as war always does ;





the land went untilled and there was little bread to eat; and the rich and strong men did what they liked with the poor and the weak.

The king looked into this matter himself. "All the judgments which were given he would examine, and if he found any wrong he would call the judges themselves before him."

"Day and night," we read, "he was busy in this work, for in that whole kingdom the poor had no helpers save the king himself."

### III

Let us take a peep into the book of Alfred's laws. It shows us among other things what an unruly state his people had got into. They seem, indeed, to have passed most of their time in striking each other.

Perhaps they got into a habit of striking from fighting so long with the Danes.

"If a man strike his neighbour with a stone or with his fist, so that he is badly hurt but still can walk with a stick, let him who struck send a doctor and do the man's work for him while he is unable."

How much more sensible than sending the man to prison, where he could have done nothing to put things right!

"Injure ye not the widows and the step-children, nor hurt them anywhere; for if ye do otherwise they will cry unto me, and I will hear them, AND I WILL THEN SLAY YOU WITH MY SWORD."

We can almost see the king's eyes flash as we read these words.

"Judge thou very evenly. Judge thou not one thing to the rich and another to the poor; nor one to thy friend, another to thy foe.

"If a man's ear be struck off, let thirty

## 50 The Progress to History

shillings be given. If the hearing be impaired, let seventy shillings be given.

"If a man strike out another's eye, let him pay seventy shillings and six shillings and six pennies and a third part of a penny.

"If a man strike out another's tooth in the front of his head, let him pay for it with eight shillings. A man's grinder is worth fifteen shillings.

"If the shooting-finger be struck off, the payment is fifteen shillings."

It was the king's desire that all boys who were free-born should learn to read. He also brought learned men from other lands to teach his people. And with the help of some of these men he turned some Latin books into English. One of these was a geography book, another was a history.

If travellers from far-off lands came to the king's court, they always went to see him; and no one listened more eagerly to their stories than King Alfred the Great.

## THE DOMESDAY BOOK

THIS is the story of an old book which was written in a language that you could not read, and which is so "dry" that if you could you would not read it

That does not look very promising, but I think you will find that the story of the making of the book is full of interest

You know how Duke William of Normandy came to England and fought King Harold at the battle of Hastings. 'That was a fatal day to England,' writes a monk who lived about the time, "a great havoc of our dear country through its change of masters

For a long time after this great battle there was not much peace in the land. As you know, William did not find it easy to make the English obey him. There were many risings but he put them down with a strong hand

And after the fighting was over and the



## THE TOURNAMENT OF LADIES

*The picture shows a game played by the knights and ladies of the time of the Normans and later. A castle built strongly of wood is defended by ladies against a party of knights. A lady in the highest tower is blowing a trumpet to rouse the courage of the defenders of the castle. The others at their different posts are showering down roses upon the besiegers. A knight is tumbling off a ladder from the "blow" of a rose, which has carried off his helmet; a second is trying to get in at the gate; a third is using a crossbow; the rest are keeping up an eager sham fight, sword in hand, but when one is struck by a rose he is "killed." The lower picture shows the feast after the "fight."*

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land was at peace, because much of it was laid waste he became known as William the Conqueror. The title fitted him very well.

But the new king had also made up his mind to rule justly and well now that he was really master; and it was his desire for a lasting peace which made him so severe in putting down rebellion.

When he had been king for nineteen years and the country was settling down, it was told to him that the Danes were planning to invade the country.

Now this was of course just what William had done himself nineteen years before; but now he was master of the land and meant to defend it with all his power. He looked about for soldiers, but found that in crushing the English he had broken up the army which King Alfred had set up; and many of the English nobles had either gone over the sea, or had become monks and given up fighting.

He therefore sent across to Normandy for

men to come and be ready to fight in defence of England. The soldiers came, and while they were waiting for the Danes, who never landed, they lived in the homes of the English country people, where they were by no means welcome, as you will understand.

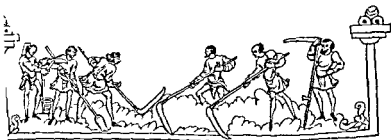
Then some of the leading men went to the king and told him how the people were making complaints. The king had the good sense to see that things were wrong; and he called a great meeting of the chief lords to talk over the matter.

Perhaps it was some one who remembered the olden days who advised the king to make those who held the land defend it. This was fair enough of course, but it was not known to the king's officers how much land each great lord held.

And as you will agree, it was only fair that those who had the most land should find the *largest number of fighting men* among the farm workers and fit them for war.

So the king ordered that a great register





should be made of all the lands in all the counties and the names of the men who held them.

I said, "all the counties," but this is not quite correct. The king left out Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, and Durham. For he had "conquered" these so well, that there were scarcely any homes or men left in them.

But his officers were soon at work in the rest of the country busily making their lists, and in about a year they had finished the work.

They did their work very well, for they not only measured the lands but made lists of the farm stock ; "there was not an ox or a



cow or a pig passed by that was not set down in the account." So writes an old monk, giving us what he thought an example of the king's meanness.

Then the king called another meeting, this time at Salisbury, where all the chief land-owners met him. There they went down on their knees in turn, placed their hands between the king's hands, and promised to be faithful to him and to serve him in war in return for the lands they held.

This meant that they were to bring men to follow him in all his wars; and thus the king made an army in the land to defend it.

This is the story of Domesday Book, for that was the name given to the collected lists



made by the king's officers. It was the book from which the king could tell at a glance how much money a landowner ought to pay him, and how many men he was to bring to the wars.

The pictures in this chapter show Englishmen of this time engaged in farm work. They are worth examining with care, for they show the farm hands (1) haymaking, (2) harvesting, (3) making a fire in November, (4) threshing and winnowing.



## THE GREAT CHARTER

## I

I AM writing this chapter on a beautiful day in summer—to be exact on the 15th day of June.

You may wonder why I tell you this. Because just about seven hundred years ago the 15th of June was *one of the most decisive days in British history.*

Do not forget the date—the 15th day of June in the year 1215. Now let me tell you my story.

The ruler of England at this time was King John, of whom our history has little that is good to tell us. He was the brother of Richard of the Lion Heart, but he had no share of his bravery or of his generous spirit.

He was selfish and cruel, as well as mean and crafty; and he would stoop to any means to get his own way. Our great poet Shakespeare tells a very sad story of how the king treated his nephew, Prince Arthur, whom

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some of the great lords wished to make king.

It is only a story but, from what we know of this king, it may well have been true. The poet tells how the king put Arthur in prison in a strong castle, and then sent men to put out his eyes with hot irons.

But the young prince pleaded with them so pitifully that they had no heart to do the cruel deed; and they went back to the king without having carried out his orders.

After a time, however, the prince disappeared, and it was said by many people that King John had ordered some one else to put him to death.

Some say that he had killed him with his own hands, but we must learn in studying history to look for the truth, and not to give blame where it is not deserved. In this matter the only thing of which we are sure is that Prince Arthur was never heard of again.

The French king said openly that King John was a murderer, and called upon him to

come over to France and be tried. What right had he to do this to an English king?

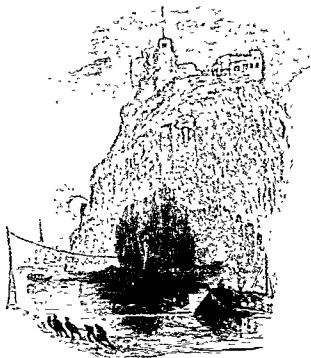
John was not only King of England, but he held wide lands in France as well; but he held them under the King of France who was his "overlord" for these lands.

But the English king only mocked at the summons of his "overlord." Then the French king said that he would take his lands from him.

King John went over to France to fight, but he was badly beaten. His soldiers had no love for him and no heart in the fight. John tried very hard to save the splendid castle shown in the picture on page 62 which had been built by Richard of the Lion Heart, but it was all of no use.

The armies of the English king were beaten from point to point, and John went home again where the great lords of England were very angry with him and began to murmur against him.

This did not make him any better, and he



did one wicked thing after another until the whole land was filled with misery and shame. At last he quarrelled with the Pope, who was the head of the Church; and to settle this dispute he gave up his crown to the Pope and took it back again as a gift from him!

"He has become the Pope's man," the people said in anger. "He has given up the very name of king; from a free man he has become a slave."

John now tried to set things right by going to war with France again in the hope of winning back what he had lost. If he



came back as a conqueror, he thought the great lords and all the people of England would let him do as he liked.

But he was badly beaten in France, and it was this which made the English barons at last rise up against him.

If the king would not rule well, they said, they would force him to do so. And if that proved to be of no use, they were ready to fight him and to choose another king



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### II

The barons chose as their leader a brave and clever man named Stephen Langton, who was Archbishop of Canterbury. Langton thought that a king should rule for the good of his people, and had made up his mind that King John must do this.

With this man at their head, the barons met the king and told him boldly what they wanted. The king was to sign a paper or parchment which was called a charter, and which contained a number of promises to rule the people well and justly.

It was not the first charter of the English people, but it is so very important that it is known in our history as the Great Charter, or in Latin (for it was written in that tongue) as *Magna Carta*.

I have said that the king was to "sign" this parchment, but he was no scholar and could not write his name. The first English king who could do this was Richard II., who lived about a hundred years after King John.

It would be more correct to say that the king was to "seal" the Great Charter. That is to say, he was to give orders for his officer to fix a round metal seal bearing the king's portrait to the foot of the parchment by means of a kind of ribbon.

When the promises of the Great Charter were read over to him, King John burst into a fit of passion. "Why do they not ask for my kingdom?" he cried, and the barons left him in a mood as angry as his own.

The king tried to get together an army, for he too meant to fight it out. But among all the great lords of England only seven would stand by him.

He was forced to give way. A meeting was arranged on an island in the Thames, not far from the royal castle of Windsor. The king's men and the barons came armed to the conference, for neither side could tell how that great day would end.

But there was to be no fighting on that 15th day of June in the year 1215. The

## 66      The Progress to History

promises of the Great Charter were read over to the king, and he gave his order for the royal seal to be fixed to the parchment.

### III

A number of copies of the Charter were then made, and these were sealed and sent to the chief men in all parts of the kingdom. Strange to say, most of these copies have been lost; but I have been this morning to the British Museum in London to look at two of those which are left.

They are kept with great care in a glass case, and as I looked at them, a school-boy came with his father to see what they were like. I felt that one boy at least was learning his history in the right way, and that he would never forget the Great Charter.

One of these copies was found at Dover Castle more than five hundred years after it was sent out by King John's officers; and it is impossible to read it, for it is worn with age and has also been damaged by fire.



THE SEAL OF STEPHEN LANGTON

The fire has melted the great seal into a shapeless mass of lead which hangs at the foot of the brown parchment. The other copy is in a better state, but the seal has been taken from it. You can, however, see the hole in the skin where the ribbon was passed through

## 68      The Progress to History

What was it that King John promised in this Great Charter? Why do people look at the old parchment with such awe and reverence after all these hundreds of years?

Read and learn two of the promises in this famous charter, and you may then begin to understand how important it really is.

NO FREEMAN SHALL BE SEIZED OR IMPRISONED, OR IN ANY WAY BROUGHT TO RUIN. WE WILL NOT GO AGAINST ANY MAN SAVE BY THE LAW OF THE LAND.

TO NO MAN WILL WE SELL OR DENY OR DELAY RIGHT OR JUSTICE.

So the Great Charter was won. King John was very angry when he was forced to agree to it, and it is said that he flung himself on the floor of his apartment and gnawed the rushes which formed the "carpet" in his terrible rage.

This happened when they came to tell the king that copies of the parchment had been sent all over the land.

"They have given me five-and-twenty over-kings," he said in his rage. And it was not long before he broke the promises he had made, and began to fight his people with the help of soldiers from foreign lands.

During the fighting King John marched to the north, and on his way had to cross the Wash with his army. In making the crossing he was surprised by the tide, and his baggage with the royal treasures was washed away. He went to an abbey not far away, where he was seized by a fever of which he died.

But when the new king, Henry III. (whom you can see in the boat), came to the throne, he had to promise to rule in the manner laid down in the Great Charter.



## THE GREAT COUNCIL

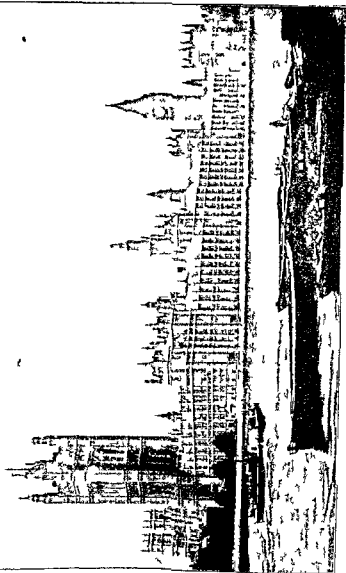
WHEN a gentleman has the right to put M.P. after his name, it shows that he is a Member of Parliament. If you have begun to read the newspapers, you will often find these letters during your reading, as well as on bills which give notices of meetings.

A man is proud of being able to write these letters after his name, and he ought to be so ; for they show that the people of some town or district have chosen him to help to make the laws of the land.

The picture on page 71 shows the great building in London where these laws are made. It is known as the Houses of Parliament and is one of the most important buildings in the world.

The greater part of this building is only about eighty years old, but Parliament itself may be said to be nearly seven hundred years old.

If Parliament is so important in the life of



THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT



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the nation, you will be ready to agree that the day on which it began was one of the decisive days in our history. Let me tell you the story of that time.

One day King Henry III. of England was rowing with a party on the river Thames—not far from the place where the Houses of Parliament now stand—when a thunderstorm came on.

The thunder rolled and the lightning flashed, and the boat was rowed for protection to a large palace which stood by the side of the river, and which belonged to the Bishop of Durham.

A nobleman named Earl Simon of Montfort, who was staying with the bishop, came down the steps to meet the royal barge. "Do not fear," he said to the king, who seemed to be terrified, "the storm is passing over and will soon be gone."

"If I fear the thunder, Sir Earl," said the king in the voice of a spoilt child, "I fear you more than all the thunder in the world."

King Henry had very good reason to say this; for he knew that Earl Simon was not pleased with the way in which he was acting as king, and he knew also that there were many nobles in the land who thought the same as Earl Simon.

This king was the son of King John, of whom we read in our last chapter. He was not cruel and bad like his father, indeed he was very pleasant and kind in many ways.

But he was careless and unwise, and he did so many foolish things that at last the chief men in the kingdom made up their minds to govern the land for him; and Earl Simon was chosen as their leader.

At one time this great nobleman had been the king's chief friend, and was greatly loved by Henry's son, Prince Edward, whom he taught many things and especially to keep his promises.

But now the friends were parted, never to come together again, for before long there was war between the two parties. There was



A KING IN HIS COURT.

a battle at Lewes, in Sussex, in which Prince Edward fought against his old teacher, who could not help feeling proud of his bravery.

Earl Simon's men wore white crosses on back and breast in this battle, and before the fight began they knelt in prayer. This was no empty show, for these men had made up their minds that they were fighting for the good of the whole country; and this feeling, backed by Earl Simon's skill as a soldier, won the battle for him.

The king, his

not

nobles were made prisoners, and Prince Edward also gave himself up And for two years Earl Simon was really king of the land

He tried to rule, not to please himself but for the good of the people, and he tried to make the people govern themselves

From very early times there had always been a Great Council of the wisest men in the land, whose duty it was to advise the king how to govern This Council was made up of the great and rich nobles, but now Earl Simon said that those wise men who were not rich ought also to have a share in making the laws

After Domesday Book men were sometimes called to the Great Council from each of the counties But Earl Simon said that others ought to come from the towns which were springing up in many parts of the land

This was agreed to, and fifty years after the Great Charter was sealed, a new Great Council was called together

And we shall be quite right if we look upon this as the beginning of our Parliament

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But Earl Simon did not rule the country for long. One day, it is said, Prince Edward was out riding with his keepers, when he challenged them to race him. They set off, and the Prince who had a very good horse went farther than the winning-post.

He made his escape, got together an army, and there was a battle at Evesham in Worcester. Prince Edward won, and Earl Simon was killed after a brave fight.

But his work for the nation was not lost. King Henry came back to the throne, but he was wiser now, and left much of the work of ruling in the hands of his brave son Edward.

This prince, as we have said, was trained as a youth by the great Earl himself. And when he became king as Edward I. he called a Parliament together like that of Earl Simon because, as he said, "that which touches all should be approved by all."

These words make a good motto for Parliament.

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feast when he saw Matthew among the company and told him to sit on the middle step between the floor and the throne. Then he asked him to write an account of all that he saw.

We may truly say then that Matthew was one of our first reporters. He always tried to get his news from people who had seen things for themselves, and on the whole his history is true.

At one time King Henry came to St Albans on a visit, and he was very kind to Matthew the writer. He asked him to eat with him, and he was so much interested in his writing that he sat up all night with him, and told him many things which Matthew would have found it hard to learn elsewhere.

"He guided my pen with much good-will and diligence," writes the monk, but this kindness did not make the writer set down any lies in his book.

He thought, as other good men of the time thought, that the king was not ruling



*King and Architect.*

*Builders at Work.*



*Choosing an Abbot.*

*King granting Charter.*

# THE FOUNDING OF A MINSTER.



HENRY AND HIS QUEEN CROSSING THE CHANNEL

wisely, and he said so. For he loved his country and its people better than the favour of great men, of princes, and of kings.

If you were to read his history, you would think that there is a great deal in it about monasteries, that is to say, the places where the monks had their homes.

But you must remember that these places might be called the towns of the time. In each of them there would be a great church like the abbey behind me, there would be a library and a place for writing and painting, there would be workshops for masons,



smiths, carpenters, glass-makers, and other clever men; and round about would be a high wall to keep out an enemy.

Outside the wall there would be many farms which grew corn and other things for the monks. But the gardens and orchards of the monks would be within the walls; and from what I have found out to-day, I think that Matthew Paris worked in a little room which looked out on the monk's garden.

It reminds me of the funny verse in *Alice* about "cabbages and kings." For although Matthew Paris tells much about kings he does not forget the cabbages.

There are several pieces in his history which tell of that most important thing for gardeners, namely, the weather.

Here are three of them:

"This year was, on the whole, good in crops of fruit and corn; but a long drought and great heat dried up deep lakes and great

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marshes drained many rivers, and stopped the working of mills.

Even the pastures withered away,  
cruel, and the flocks and herds pined  
with hunger and thirst

\* \* \* \* \*

"On the first night of December an awful storm of thunder and lightning, wind and rain took place; all said it was a sad omen, as thunder in winter always told of evil to come.

\* \* \* \* \*

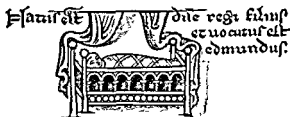
"This year passed quiet and calm filling the barns with abundance of corn, so that a measure fell in price to two shillings.

"The temperature of winter was changed to that of spring; trees might be seen shooting in February, and birds singing and sporting as if it were April."

Matthew Paris was not only a writer but an artist as well. His books are full of

pictures of the kind which are shown in this chapter.

Some of these look like the drawings of a school-boy, but all of them show us something of the life of the time, even if it is only the shape of the cradle in which the king's little son was put to sleep.



The pictures on page 79 may well have been drawn to show how St. Albans Abbey was built. It shows what a keen interest was taken by the kings of that time in setting up these churches and homes for the monks.

## A DECISIVE BATTLE

IN one of the books of Matthew Paris there is a map of our island which is shown on page 6 of this book. Look at it side by side with one of the beautiful maps of to-day and you will learn a great deal.

The bottom part of the old map from Norfolk to the Bristol Channel is fairly correct, but the rest is mostly guess work. You see, people have had to learn how to make maps just as they have had to learn how to do everything else.

Now Edward I would know Matthew Paris very well, and I feel sure that he would be interested in this map. I can imagine him looking at it one day and saying to himself "This island ought to form one country under one king."

Then he would remember that Wales had a prince of its own, and Scotland a king of its own. Perhaps it was this map from St. Albans which helped him to make

ligunt pſenuam iromā. Talem monam mernit  
 apō beacorum apiaꝝ chouralem reibunonē re  
 apunt pcoruabilibus.



beacorum apiaꝝ

A MONK IN THE WRITING-ROOM OF A MONASTERY ENGAGED  
 ON A MANUSCRIPT.

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up his mind to be master of the whole island—if he could!

Do not forget that, king as he was, he could not get a better map than this. For there were no others to be had.

Now let us see how he set about the task of making himself master of the whole of Britain. He began with Wales which was ruled by several princes who fought a great deal among themselves and seemed to care very little for the good of their country.

One of these princes named Llywelyn tried to make himself master of the whole country and to drive out the English. But he was killed, and after that there was no one strong enough to stand against King Edward.

He built great castles in various parts of Wales, and put soldiers in them to frighten the people into obedience. In Carnarvon Castle a son was born to him, and it is said that the Welsh chiefs promised to obey this prince who had been born in their own

country and could not, of course, speak a word of English.

Since that time the eldest son of the English king has usually been made Prince of Wales, though he does not take this title as soon as he is born.

King Edward now claimed that at last there was one ruler south of the Scottish Border, and he turned his thoughts to Scotland. Not long before, the little Queen of that country had died while she was crossing the sea from Norway; and now there was a dispute as to who was to be king.

The English king was asked to settle the question, and he went north to do so, meeting the Scottish nobles at Norham Castle near the River Tweed.

He chose a man named John Balliol because he promised to rule Scotland under King Edward as his overlord. The new Scottish king was a weak creature with very little spirit, but after a time even he rose against his English master.

## 86      The Progress to History

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country and could not, of course, speak a word of English.

Since that time the eldest son of the English king has usually been made Prince of Wales, though he does not take this title as soon as he is born.

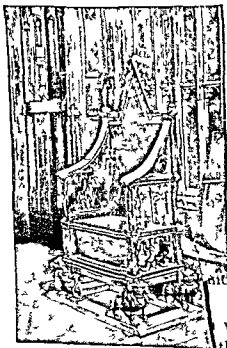
King Edward now claimed that at last there was one ruler south of the Scottish Border, and he turned his thoughts to Scotland. Not long before, the little Queen of that country had died while she was crossing the sea from Norway; and now there was a dispute as to who was to be king.

The English king was asked to settle the question, and he went north to do so, meeting the Scottish king at Norham Castle near the River Tyne.

He chose a son named John Balliol because he was a weak creature with very little power. He gave him his overlordship over Scotland. The new king, John Balliol, after a time even he rose up against the English master.

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Then King Edward marched north with an army and made the new king a prisoner. He put English soldiers into the Scottish



castles to make the people obey him and he brought back to London the great block of stone on which the Scottish kings used to sit when they were crowned at a place called Stone

various places. This stone is placed beneath the seat of the chair in which the English kings were crowned and it can be seen in Westminster Abbey to day.

King Edward now thought that he was

master of the whole of the island shown in Matthew Paris's map. But he spent the rest of his life in a miserable attempt to force the people of Scotland to obey him.

First of all he had to fight against William Wallace; and when his soldiers had brought this brave man as a prisoner to London the fighting was not over; for King Edward had now to deal with Robert Bruce.

This nobleman got himself crowned as King of Scotland and gathered together an army. King Edward was very angry and sent an army against him. Bruce was beaten and was driven into the mountains, where he wandered about for a long time and had many adventures of which I have no space to tell.

Then King Edward died, and his weak and foolish son was made King of England as Edward II; and the weakness of the new king gave King Robert of Scotland a chance which he did not lose.

The new king marched a splendid army into Scotland, and King Robert met him

## 90 The Progress to History

near Stirling, by the banks of a little stream known as the Bannockburn. This was on the 24th day of June in the year 1314 just six hundred years ago to-day.

Just before the fight began a knight rode out from the English lines towards King Robert as he rode along the front of his army. The king rose in his stirrups as the rider passed him, and struck him such a blow on his head with his battle-axe that he fell dead to the earth.

This was the beginning of misfortune for the English army which had counted on an easy victory. And at the end of that decisive day King Edward was riding post-haste across country to Dunbar, where he found a ship to carry him back to England.

After this the Scottish king kept his throne in peace, and ruled his people for himself. Many years afterwards, as you will see, Scotland and England were to come together under one king, but this was because both countries wished to do so.

King Edward wished to make the two countries into one as the wolf makes himself and the lamb into one—by gobbling it up!

## LOSS AND GAIN

THE decisive days in our history have not always been days of gain; sometimes they have been days of loss; and sometimes, as we shall see in this chapter, it has been a good thing to lose.

Look at a map of Europe and tell me which country on the mainland lies nearest to our own islands? As you might expect, we have had a great deal to do with this country during our history.

Dates and tables are not very amusing things, but they are often helpful. Let us look at the short table given on the next page and see if we can use it to help us to remember a little of what our country has had to do with France.

BOLVINES	Loss	1214	King John
CLIECY	Gain	1346	Edward III
AGINCOURT	Gain	1415	Henry V
ORLEANS	Loss	1429	Henry VI

You will remember that William the Conqueror was Duke of Normandy before he came over to be King of England. Now Normandy took up a large part of France, so that the English king was at the same time a powerful French noble.

As time went on, the kings of England got still more land in France owing to marriages with princesses in that country. But in the time of King John nearly all these lands were lost after the Battle of Bouvines, in which that king's hired soldiers were badly beaten.

So King John earned his name of Lackland, and his people were very angry with him, as you have read in an earlier chapter.

But the loss of the land in France was really a good thing for England. It made her

rulers think more of their own country; and it would have been well if they had given up all thought of France.

But they did not do so. Before long they were trying to win not great estates in France, but the crown of that kingdom itself.

That was why Edward III. and the Black Prince fought the great fight at Crécy in the north of France, not very far from Calais, where you land after your passage in the steam-boat from Dover.

It was a brave fight, and whenever we read of it we feel proud of our stout English archers as well as of the youthful Black Prince who won his spurs that day. But all the same, the English king was fighting for something that did not belong to him, and something which would not have been good for him to possess.

You see England and France were going to form two great nations, each separate and distinct; and for many reasons one king could never rule both countries.



HENRY V LAYING SIEGE TO A FRENCH CITY

(Note the walls the moat the gate the drawbridge and the stockade set up by the besiegers.)



The king who won Crécy and who nearly hung the six brave men of Calais did not become King of France; and when he died England was too busy with her own affairs to trouble about the French crown.

But there arose in time a brave and warlike King of England, who thought he would try once more to join the two countries under one ruler. This was Henry V., who was such a madcap in his youth.

He crossed the Channel and fought a brave fight at Agincourt, where the English knights and bowmen once more did deeds of which we are all proud; and after this battle it really seemed as if the two countries were at last to be joined together under one king.

For Henry married the daughter of the French king, and it was agreed that he was to be crowned as King of France when his father-in-law died. But he died before his father-in-law, and it was his little son Henry VI. who was named King of France as well as King of England.

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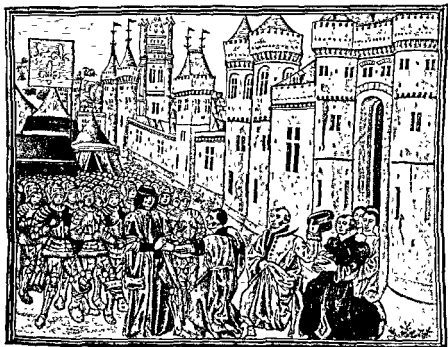
So the great game was won—or seemed to be won. But what a mockery it was!

It is one thing for a prince to get himself crowned as king, and quite another thing for him to get the people of his new country to love and obey him. And it was not long before the new French king and all his fighting men were sent about their business—and by a woman too!

If we are fair-minded we must be glad of this, although it went against us. What should *we* do if a foreign prince made himself king of *our* country by force of arms? Do you think that he would have a happy time? Not until he went home again.

You see the proper thing is for each nation to be free and to try to be friends with all the others.

Well, then, as you might expect, the French fought against the new king from England, although his mother *was* a French princess. And, of course, the English soldiers tried to force them to obey their child-king.



SURRENDER OF A FRENCH CITY.

At one time during the struggle the English sat down round the French city of Orleans, meaning, if they could, to take it for themselves. And then there took place that strange event—one of the strangest in the history of the world—when a woman led an army against the foes of her country, and in.

## 96      The Progress to History

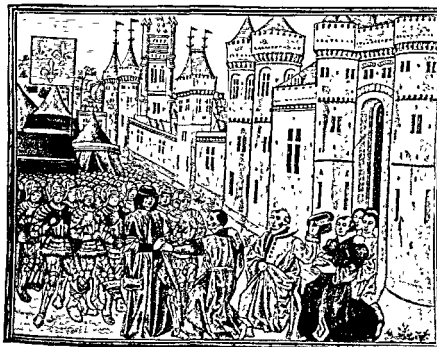
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the name of Christ drove them from the land

This was the shepherdess, Joan of Arc, who "raised the siege of Orleans and made it possible for the son of the last French monarch to be crowned as king

So we lost France to our great gain. From that time each of the two countries went on its own way. They often fought, but it was no longer like "the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown"

Yet the English kings went on calling themselves "Kings of France" for hundreds of years, and it is not so very long ago, as history goes, that they gave up doing so

Of course those brave fights at Crécy and Agincourt were not all in vain. They showed the people of France and other countries that the men of England were going to count for something in the history of the world.

Before that, the princes and nobles of France and Germany and Spain and Italy had looked down upon the people of these

islands of ours as very poor specimens indeed. For, compared with these countries England was very small and weak, and almost unknown in Europe.

But she came forward step by step after she lost France, and was free to attend to her own business.

## THE BROTHERS OF THE PEN

IN the picture on page 85 we see a monk busy with the work of copying a book. For in the days of Matthew Paris, and indeed for two hundred years after his time, all books were written by hand.

At first all these books were made in the monasteries or homes of the monks, and only the rich nobles could afford to buy them. But as time went on, more books were made, for some one found out how to make good paper from linen rags, and this was much cheaper than parchment which was made from the skins of animals.

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So many writers or "scribes" were now needed to make books that the work was done in other places besides the monasteries. A nobleman would have his own scribe living in his castle, and in each of the big cities there were companies of writers who kept together and looked after each other.

In Brussels the company of scribes was known as "The Brothers of the Pen." In our own country the chief places for making books were London, Durham, and Winchester.

The pictures in these old books were done by hand, and many of them were very well done in pretty colours. The country scene shown in the picture on page 104 is taken from a book written by one of "the Brothers of the Pen" four hundred years ago.

The picture would not be drawn by the scribe but by an artist, and he would also put little pictures into the initial letters as shown in this example of a capital I, with reapers





and a gleaner. I wish I could show you the pretty colours of this initial and picture.

Now, people liked books so well that they wanted more and more of them, and the paper-makers went on setting up more and more mills in different parts of Europe, for

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at first not much paper was made in England. Indeed, so much paper was now made that it became very cheap and the paper-makers began to wish that books could be made at a quicker rate.

Meanwhile men were thinking very hard

What I am going to tell you now is all out of my own head, but it is quite likely that something like this really happened.

One day some one watched a saddler using metal stamps or "dies" to make pretty patterns on a piece of leather, perhaps for the saddle of a lady's horse. He had some new stamps, and before stamping the leather he tried them on a piece of paper after smearing them over with colour.

Metal stamps were common things in the workshops of that time, and the goldsmiths used them to make pretty patterns on all kinds of things. What would be more simple than to cut letters on metal stamps and use them for printing?

Once the idea had entered into the head of

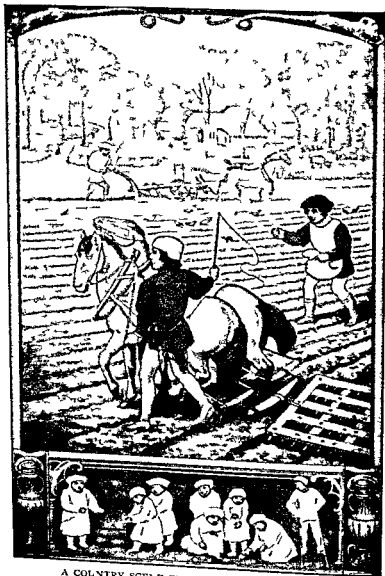
some clever man the rest would be easy. One of the first printers was a goldsmith, and the making of good stamps in the shape of letters would be an easy matter for him.

So the work of printing began in Germany; and the very first books of all were printed in a way which we cannot beat to-day. You see the first printers said to themselves, "The books written by hand are so very beautiful, that if we want people to buy our printed books we must make them very good indeed."

But what about the pictures in colour and the pretty initials? People liked these very much, and they would miss them in their books.

Yet if books were going to be so much cheaper, buyers must not expect to get pictures as well; but if they cared to pay rather more, they might have pretty initials or even pictures put in by hand. So at first the printer left spaces for this to be done.

I have seen many printed books in which



A COUNTRY SCENE FROM AN OLD PRAYER BOOK

the initials have been painted in, and they look very fine even after four hundred years.

Many splendid books were printed in Germany and France and Italy before printing was begun in England ; but the English scribes and artists were some of the best in the world, and the English written books were some of the finest of their kind.

There was a Kentish man named William Caxton who spent many years of his life in the country of "the Brothers of the Pen." He was a scribe who had done much hard work in copying books, and he says that "with the work my pen is worn, my hand weary and not steady, and my eyes dimmed with too much looking on the white paper."

But he heard one day of the wonderful new plan for making books, and though he was by no means a young man, he set to work, "at great charge and trouble," he says, to learn the new way. Then he bought a printing-press and came home again.

This was in the year 1476, surely one of



AN ENGLISH PRINTING OFFICE OF ABOUT A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER  
CAXTON

(Showing one workman at the case putting the letters together another  
with the inkers, and a third working the press.)

the most decisive years in our history; for the power of books no man can measure

Meanwhile the printers of Germany and France and Italy had given up leaving spaces in their books for coloured pictures and had begun to use outline pictures in black which were cut backwards on wood or soft metal.

The men of Italy were very clever at this work, but when Caxton began to put pictures

into his books he made them like that printed below, which shows a smith in his shop.

It is not very good, is it? But then, every-



thing must have a beginning. Try for yourselves to draw something backwards on a piece of soft wood and then cut away all the wood between the lines. Now ink over the lines, and stamp your "picture" on paper.

## CABOT AND COLUMBUS

THIS is a story of a decisive day in *Spanish* history, but before it is done, you shall tell me whether it is not also a tale which has a great deal to do with British history

One autumn day more than four hundred years ago, a wandering stranger, holding a little boy by the hand, knocked at the gate of a monastery in a Spanish seaport town

At once the door was opened by one of the monks. "In the name of Christ," said the traveller, "give me bread" "In that Great Name," said the porter, "enter, and partake of what we have"

The tired travellers were at once conducted to the place where the monks took their food And before any questions were put to them they were told to eat

Then the prior of the place came and asked the stranger who he was.

"I am Christopher Columbus," he said, "and I come from Genoa in Italy. From a



boy I loved the sea and ships, and I have given much study to maps and charts and to the stars which guide seamen upon their way.

"I have ventured out upon the sea, and have been even as far as England, and out into the Atlantic to the islands of Madeira which lie far off from Spain.

"Beyond those islands lies the great ocean which men call the 'Sea of Darkness.' But I say that across that water lies the western way to India, the land whence come the spices.

"I have told my story to many men, but all say that I have lost my wits. Your good Queen Isabella would have helped me to fit out a ship to go across the great ocean, but those about her said that I was mad, and she would not help me."

Now among the men who listened to the stranger was a monk who knew the King and Queen of Spain; and before long a promise was made to Columbus that he should have three ships to set out on his voyage.

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It was hard to find men to go on this journey but at last all was ready, and the brave travellers set out with high hopes. Look at a map of the world on a globe and see what land they would have to cross before they could come to India by going westward across the Atlantic Ocean.

For six weeks the little ships went on to the westward, and then the sailors began to lose heart. "Are there no graves at home," they said to Columbus, "that you bring us here to die?" Then they said that they would turn the ships about and go back to Spain.

But Columbus got them to wait a little longer, and in a few days they saw some birds, then a piece of sugar cane, then a log of wood, and at last a branch covered with fresh green leaves and bearing small berries.

"And for these signs," we read, "all of them breathed again and were glad."

Late at night Columbus saw and pointed out a light far away across the water, at two

o'clock the next morning the watchman called out, "Land ahead." This was on

FRIDAY, 12th October 1492,

the birthday of the New World; for Columbus had discovered America.

It was not, indeed, the mainland of that great continent, but one of the islands now known as the West Indies.

Columbus dressed himself with great care and went on shore with his men. Then they all "gave thanks to God, kneeling down and kissing the ground with tears of joy for the great mercy shown to them."

Five years later an English ship commanded by an Italian captain named Cabot came within sight of the mainland of North America; but the men on board, who came from Bristol, did not land.

In the next year Columbus landed on the mainland and so finished his great work of leading the way for others to follow.

It was not long before the ships of Spain

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were sailing merrily across the "Sea of Darkness" and coming back, still more merrily laden with silver and gold; for the New World proved to be a rich treasure-house for the country which had sent Columbus on his first voyage.

But the new lands had not been found for Spain alone. There was another country which meant to have a share in the good things, and that was Britain.

So the ships set out from Bristol and Plymouth and other ports on the coast-line of the Devon and Cornwall peninsula, which seems to form a kind of foot outstretched and eager to race across the great ocean.

As one might expect, Spaniards and British came to blows over the matter, and it was not until we had beaten the Spanish Armada that we won a place in the New World.

When Columbus was looking for a prince who would help him he sent his brother to England to beg the help of King Henry VII.



SEBASTIAN CABOT.

That monarch looked at the map which was shown to him and at once sent to call Columbus to England.

But before the message reached him, the great sailor had set out on his voyage to America; and England missed her chance.

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### KINGS OF THE SEA"

One of our great writers says, "God has made nobler heroes but he never made a finer gentleman than Walter Raleigh."

It was not only that Raleigh was courteous. The story which tells how he laid his cloak in the mud for Queen Elizabeth to step upon shows how polite he was. But he was a great deal more than that.

He was as brave as a lion. He loved his country and was ready to lay down his life for her. He was patient in time of trouble, and he spent his life in working for the good of the people of his native land. These are some of the things which make a gentleman.

Raleigh lived at a time when there were many decisive days in our history, and he played a manly part in more than one of them. He was a Devon man, and Devonshire is rightly proud of him.

Look at the map of England and note how the peninsula of Devon and Cornwall





looks out across the broad Atlantic as if it wished to find out something about other lands far away across the sea. This is just what the men of Devon tried to do in the

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time of Queen Elizabeth, and among them Raleigh was one of the foremost.

He sailed away with a crew of Devon men across that ocean to try to find new homes for Englishmen who were not afraid of work, and who wished to win some of the wealth of the New World.

He knew that the men of Spain had led the way to those lands across the Atlantic; but he knew also that there was room in America for Englishmen too; and he was not in the least afraid of the Spaniards.

On the south-eastern coast of what is now the United States he tried to start a new country which was named Virginia, in honour of Queen Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen. He was not able to do so for several reasons, but he deserves credit for trying; and when we speak of the "great British Empire" we must remember Raleigh as one of the men who were there at the beginning of it.

He had heard many wonderful stories of a city of gold which the Spaniards called El

Dorado, and which was said to be somewhere in South America. The stories were enough to make any brave man leave his home, even if it *were* in "glorious Devon."

In the palace of the King of El Dorado, so the story said, "the vessels of his house, table and kitchen, were of pure gold or silver. He had also in his palace statues of gold as big as giants, and gold images of all the animals, birds, trees, and herbs that the earth brings forth.

"He had also boxes and troughs of gold and silver, and heaps of golden bars like piles of fire-wood in a farm-yard. In his garden were all kinds of flowers and trees of gold and silver."

It is clear that this wonderful king had more gold and silver than was good for him. So Raleigh's men tried to discover his golden capital; and if they failed in this, they at least found out something about the unknown land of South America, and this knowledge was of greater value than heaps of fine gold.

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After Queen Elizabeth died Raleigh fell into deep trouble. It was said that he had plotted against the new king and he was sent as a prisoner to the Tower of London.

Here he stayed for over twelve years. Then he said that he could find a new gold mine for the king in South America; and as King James wanted money very badly he let him go.

But Raleigh did not find a new mine, and he lost his son in a fight with the Spaniards. When he came home again the king was very angry with him, and he was put to death. He died "like an English gentleman."

Raleigh had taken his part in the fighting with Spain. But, as we shall see, the man who played a still greater part was Francis Drake, the first Englishman to sail round the world.

"Drake he was a Devon man  
And ruled the Devon seas

He hated Spain as much as he loved



Devon and England, and that was very much indeed. And when he saw a Spanish ship or a heap of Spanish gold he took it, if he was

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strong enough and he thought that this was quite right and proper even if at the moment, we were not at war with Spain.

The other day I saw some boys and girls in a little carriage in the London Zoo which was drawn not by a pony, but by a llama, and the sight of the patient animal reminded me of the story of Drake and the silver.

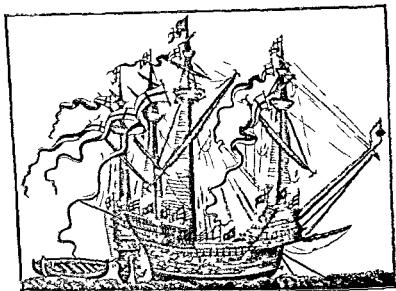
It all happened on his famous voyage round the world. One day his little ship the *Pelican* came to a port in South America, where he found on the wharf several piles of silver bars with a few workmen lying beside them fast asleep.

Drake landed, bound the men, but did not hurt them and took the silver, which he put into the hold of his ship. Then his man at the look-out told him that he could see a number of llamas coming down from the mountains with more silver on their backs.

Drake waited for them, and this silver too went into the hold of the *Pelican*. The Spaniards had never seen an English ship



QUEEN ELIZABETH'S PICNIC.



in that harbour before, and they did not think it was necessary to keep a strong guard at the place. Drake considered that if they could not keep their silver safe they did not deserve to have it.

With things happening like this it is not surprising that Spain and England should come to blows, and when war did break out no one was more glad than Drake.

Do you remember the sentence from *Alice*



*in Wonderland?* "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "Who is to be Master?—that's all."

This was the way that Drake looked at the constant disputes with Spain; and the defeat of the Spanish Armada settled who was to be master.

He threw himself into this great fight with all the eagerness of a boy at his games. It was he who sailed away to Spain and burnt the store-ships in the harbour of Cadiz, thereby delaying the sailing of the great fleet for a year.

It was he who kept up the spirits of the men of Devon when they knew that the ships of Spain were on the way.

"He was playing at Plymouth a rubber of bowls

When the great Armada came;  
And he said, 'They must wait their turn,  
good souls,'

So he stooped and finished the game."

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It was he who helped to send the fire-ships among the Spanish ships when they were resting before coming to 'take London'

And it was he who joined in the chase of the proud ships of Spain when they were blown by the strong wind past the mouth of the Thames to the northward.

'With all their pride and noise, he wrote in great glee, "they did not, in sailing round England on their way home, so much as sink or take one cock-boat of ours, or even harm so much as one sheep-cote in the land."

But, in my enthusiasm, I am beginning my story of the great Spanish Armada at the wrong end

### AN OLD ANCHOR

WHAT have I seen to-day? Well, this morning I went down a broad street in London called Whitehall. I stopped beside the two mounted Horse Guards who were

sitting like statues at each side of a stone gateway, through which I could see the greener trees of a pretty park.

But I did not look at the fine Horse Guards, much as I admire them. I turned my back on them to look at a large piece of rusty old iron in a gateway on the opposite side of the road.

It was brought here all the way from the rocky north-west coast of Ireland, and now it is carefully kept in a covering of wire netting. For it is the lower part of a great anchor which once belonged to one of the splendid ships of the Spanish Armada.

This vessel was wrecked off the coast of Ireland on its way home. If you look at a map of Europe you will see that the ship was going a long way out of its course on the way back to Spain. Let us see why it went by such a round-about way.

It will be much greater fun if you keep the map before you all the time you are reading this lesson. You will find an old one on the

next page but you ought to look at a map of Europe as well to see where Spain lies

The great Spanish ships entered the Channel at the western end, as shown by the dotted line in the left-hand bottom corner of our old map That was on a rainy Saturday night July 30, 1588

Meanwhile the English ships were gathering outside Plymouth Sound ready for Sunday morning's sun to give them light to begin harrying the great fleet of Spain

For, as we shall see as we go on, there never was a real pitched battle in this great struggle, though the men under Howard and Drake, the English leaders, were longing for one with all their hearts

They had a certain number of good ships under them, many of them of fairly large size and well fitted, and they had no fear of the Spaniards whose leader was only too anxious to avoid a fight

He wished to get up the Channel and protect the boats which were to carry an



HOW THE SPANISH ARMADA WENT HOME.

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army across from the other side of the North Sea to England

We had an army quite fit to face this great force if the Spaniards should be able to land it; and the men of all parts of England were ready to fight if need should arise

As soon as the Armada was sighted off the Lizard, beacon fires on the hills flashed the news from one end of the country to the other.

The Spanish general knew well enough what invading England would mean

"When I shall have landed," he told his master, the King of Spain, "I must fight battle after battle I must lose many men by wounds and disease I must leave men behind me as I go on to keep open my way back to the coast And in a short time my army will be too weak to advance at all"

It is one thing to land in a country like ours and quite another thing to "take" it.

On came the great fleet up the Channel, while "its feathers," as the seamen said, "were plucked one by one" A running fight was

kept up which lasted for a week, till the Spanish ships dropped anchor off Calais.

They were now drawing near to the great waiting army, and the English had little powder and shot, to say nothing of food, left in their ships. They must, by some means, force the Spaniards to fight.

So they filled eight old ships with tar and oil and rubbish, set them well alight, and sent them down with the tide among the Spanish ships. The captains at once cut their cables and stood out to sea to escape these unwelcome visitors. (There must be a great number of old anchors lying in the bed of the Channel near to the town of Calais!)

Drake made up his mind to prevent them from going back down the Channel. He closed in, and there was desperate fighting of the kind in which he excelled. Before the sun was set almost all his powder and shot were spent.

Even yet, as he tells us, the Spanish fleet seemed "wonderful great and strong." But

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her captains had lost heart, and to Drake's delight they headed for the North "Never anything pleased me better," he wrote, "than seeing the enemy fly with a southerly wind to the northwards'

Off he went after them no doubt with a merry laugh which seems to echo down the years. But his supplies ran out completely, and the rest of the work was left for the storms to do.

When they reached the open Atlantic the Spanish ships met gale after gale, and they no longer made any effort to keep together.

Only fifty ships—one third of the fleet—reached home again. The rest were sunk or driven on shore, where they were wrecked and the Spaniards murdered and robbed by the people of the coast.

Strange tales were afterwards told of some who were saved and kindly treated in Ireland but these stories do not belong to history. I wish that old rusty anchor covered with shells could tell its story to us to-day.



## FROM EDINBURGH TO LONDON

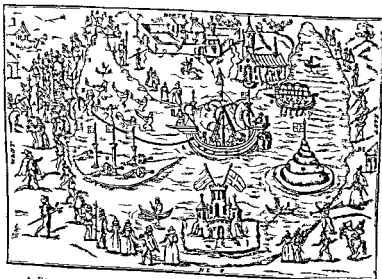
IF you look at the picture on page 121, you will see that the great lords of the time of Queen Elizabeth were not always fighting.

The Queen gave a great deal of her time to hunting and picnics and dances; indeed, some of her people said that she gave too much time to these things.

This picture was made about three years before the coming of the Spanish Armada for a *Book of Hunting*. It gives us, therefore, some true idea of the way in which these people dressed, and how a royal lunch was served in the greenwood.

The Queen's horse and attendants are in the background, as well as the huntsmen with their horns and hounds. In the middle of the picture you can see the luncheon party.

The Queen sits apart from her lords with her waiting-maids behind her and two courtiers who are great lords themselves attending to her wants. Another has doffed



A POND IN AN ENGLISH GARDEN ARRANGED FOR A FÊTE  
A VIEW OF A VESTIBULE BY QUEEN ELIZABETH

his hat and gone down upon one knee to tell her something

When she begins to eat that chicken before her she will pick it up in her fingers and tear it apart. You may find a knife on that tablecloth in front of her, but you will not find a fork!

She had good strong hands, however, not too small by any means, for I saw the

other day in Oxford a pair of her gloves which were big enough to fit a man.

Side by side with these gloves was a much smaller pair which belonged to Mary, Queen of Scots, with whom Elizabeth had a great deal to do, and whom at last she brought to her death.

Queen Mary is said to have been a very beautiful woman. She was clever, too, and knew how to make men serve her faithfully. But she did not please her Scottish subjects in many ways, and at last they sent her as a prisoner to an island in Loch Leven and placed her little son James on the throne.

After a time, however, she made her escape, and a battle was fought; but she was beaten, and rode away to Carlisle to ask for the protection of the English queen.

Elizabeth gave orders that Mary was to be taken to the strong castle of Bolton in Yorkshire; a strict watch was to be kept over her, but she was not to be treated as a prisoner.

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Now Queen Mary had many friends in England who wished to place her on the throne of that country and get rid of Elizabeth. The English queen knew about this, and therefore gave orders for Mary to be closely kept

But the Scottish queen soon made friends among the gentlemen in the castle, and one night, it is said, she contrived to escape, and rode away on horseback with two of these friends

But before they had gone far they were overtaken by the castle guards and brought back again. After this, Queen Elizabeth gave orders for the removal of Mary to another castle at Sheffield, where she spent fourteen unhappy years. During this time there was more than one plot on the part of her friends to place her on the throne of England

And at last she was put on her trial, and the judges said that she ought to be put to death. At first the English queen was

unwilling to sign the order, but in time she did so ; and the Queen of Scots went to her death like the brave woman that she was.

Now Queen Elizabeth, as you know, did not marry, and when she came to the end of her long and busy life she was asked who was to succeed her. She named King James VI. of Scotland, the son of Queen Mary ; and when she passed away this monarch became King of England also.

One day I was in York and saw in the Guildhall of that city a pretty stained-glass window which has something to do with the story which I am now telling you.

It shows the Lord Mayor of York meeting King James at one of the gates of the old city, when he was on his way from Edinburgh to London in April of the year 1603.

The king is on horseback in the centre of the picture, and the Mayor is on foot, bending low before him, and offering the sword of the city to the new King of England. - The keys



*The first coin which bore the words Great Britain.*

## OLD ENGLAND AND NEW ENGLAND

Look at the map of England and find the Wash on the east coast. In one corner of it you will see the town of Boston, which is a port that used to be much larger and busier than it is to-day. The size of its church would tell us this, even if there were no accounts of Boston in our history.

Now look away across the wide Atlantic and find out in a map of North America the great country known as the United States.

In the northern part of the Atlantic coast of this country you will find another Boston. Not far away too you will see a place called

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New Plymouth, and we all know now where the first Plymouth is to be found, and what great sailor helped to make it famous.

You will also find a Cambridge in this part of America, and I am sure it will not take you a long time to find out our own Cambridge on the map of England.

If you looked more closely into the map of North America, you would find many other towns in this part which have the same names as English towns, and, what is more, the whole district in which these towns are to be found is often spoken of as New England.

I expect you have already guessed how it happened that these towns across the ocean came to be called after towns in Old England. They were named by English people who had left their homes in this country to make other homes in the far-off land of America.

I am somewhat ashamed to tell you that the first men who went over from Old England to New England were glad to go. Let us see how this came about



A PURITAN FATHER TEACHING HIS FAMILY.

Three hundred years ago it was not so easy to worship God in your own way as it is to-day. You may now go to the services of any church you choose, and no one will interfere with you. But in the days of which I am writing, things were quite different.

In the time of King James I. there were a number of men known as Puritans who were not allowed to worship God in their





own way; so a party of them went across the North Sea to Holland.

They made new homes in that land and stayed there for a time; but they were English people, and they felt that they would like to live where they were not likely to lose their English ways.

They could not come back to Old England, but they had heard of a new country across the ocean where they thought they might be able to make new homes of the kind for which they longed. This was the land of America, of which you have already read something in earlier chapters of this book.

So a band of about one hundred and twenty of them left Holland and sailed to Southampton, where they went on board two ships named after the pretty English flowers the "Mayflower" and the "Speedwell."

Soon they set off down the Channel, but before they had gone far the *Speedwell* proved unfit for the long voyage, so she put back, and the *Mayflower* went on alone. She

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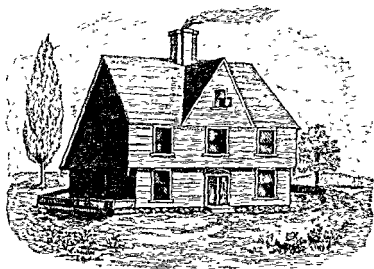
called at Plymouth on the way down the Channel and there the travellers received much kindness

The little ship now put out into the open Atlantic and at first met with good winds and fair weather. Then came cross winds and fierce storms, which shook the ship so much that it was feared she would have to put back.

But they patched up the vessel as best they could and went on, "having committed themselves to the will of God," as we read in an account written by one of them, "and after long beating at sea they came to that land that is called Cape Cod

"And the next day they came to a good harbour and were brought safe to land, and they fell on their knees and blessed the God of heaven who had brought them over the vast ocean to set their feet on the firm earth

"But yet a sea of troubles lay in their way, for they had no friends to welcome them, nor inns to refresh them, no houses much less towns to make their homes



A HOUSE BUILT AT NEW PLYMOUTH BY ONE OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

“Besides, the season was winter, full of cruel and fierce storms; and the land was full of wild beasts and wild men.

“If they looked behind them, there was the great ocean which they had passed; and the master of the ship was in no mood to take them back if they had wished to go.

“What could now help them but the Spirit of God and His grace?”

There were brave men, however, in that

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band of "Pilgrim Fathers," as they came to be called, and they set to work to make a New England. One of the first towns which they founded they called New Plymouth in memory of that older Plymouth where they had received kindness on setting out upon their way. Ten years later they founded Boston and named it after the town in the county of Lincoln from which some of them had come.

Now all this work was called "founding a colony," and the new country had the same king as Britain, which came to be known to the "colonists" across the sea as the Mother Country.

In time, other colonies were started in North America, but how they came at last to be joined together into the great country now known as the United States is a story for another day.



CHARLES I. AS A YOUNG MAN.

## A KING BROUGHT TO TRIAL

THERE are many places and buildings in London which are full of interest to boys and girls who like their history lessons. As I go about the great city I often meet parties of people who are visiting these places.

I have been this afternoon to a great hall which is now part of the Houses of Parliament. It is called Westminster Hall, and at first it seems to have little interest, for it is

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a huge bare cold place like a barn, with high walls and a lofty roof

But why is that party of people standing at the foot of the broad steps near one end of the hall? Let us go up to them and see what they are looking at so earnestly in the stone floor

It is a bright brass plate on which the following words are engraved in black

THIS TABLET MARKS THE SPOT WHERE  
CHARLES STUART, KING OF ENGLAND, STOOD  
BEFORE THE COURT                      FOR HIS TRIAL  
THE COURT MET ON SATURDAY THE 20th,  
MONDAY THE 22nd, TUESDAY THE 23rd, AND  
SATURDAY THE 27th OF JANUARY 1649,  
WHEN THE SENTENCE OF DEATH WAS  
PRONOUNCED UPON THE KING

You wonder no longer why people are so keenly interested in this brass plate And you will be quite prepared for me to tell you that the last date named above was one of the decisive days in our history

Let us see how this state of affairs was brought about

King Charles I. was a good man in many ways, and, as we shall see, he was also a very brave one. But he wished to rule the country on his own account and without the help of Parliament, and it was this which led to the great trouble in his reign.

Parliament was there, said the king, to give advice, but not to rule the land. Every person in the country, said the members of Parliament, even the king himself, must obey the laws which they had made.

Now the king was in need of money, as indeed he often was; so he ordered the richer people to lend him what he needed. Some of these gentlemen said that only Parliament could order them to pay any money, and they would not obey the king.

King Charles sent them to prison, and he began to do many other things which were against the law. When a king rules in this way history calls him a "tyrant."

Of course he had many friends who were ready enough to stand up for him, and



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before long these people formed a party which came to be known as that of the Cavaliers. They were mostly lords and rich men who dressed very gaily, and many of them wore their hair in long curls hanging down upon their shoulders.

The party of the Parliament were mostly quiet men who were neither rich nor powerful but who had made up their minds to fight if necessary in order to force the king and his friends to obey the law. Most of them wore their hair closely cropped, and on this account were given the name of Roundheads by the other party.

One of the king's chief friends was the Earl of Strafford who was very bitter against the Parliament, the members of which hated him very much. He had at one time ruled Ireland for the king, and it was said that he was now planning to bring over Irish soldiers to fight the Parliament men, and make them do as the king wished.

He was brought to trial, and it was decided



THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

to put him to death. King Charles had secretly promised to save his life, but when he heard the people of London crying out in the streets for Strafford to be executed, he gave his consent to his death.

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After this the two parties hated each other more and more and as King Charles made no attempt to rule as Parliament wished, the quarrel was bound to end in bloodshed

One day in January, just seven years before the fatal day of which the brass plate tells, the king, having kissed his wife, left his palace in Whitehall saying that in an hour he would return "master of his kingdom"

A crowd of his friends joined him as he left the palace. Most of them were armed and when the king entered the House of Commons they stayed in the great hall where their king was one day to take his trial

"Mr Speaker, said the king, 'I must for a time borrow your chair' Then he looked round the House to see if he could find five of the members who had displeased him, and whom he wished to bring to trial

"Gentlemen,' he said, "I must have them,



JOHN PYM

wherever they are." There was no word of reply. "Is Mr. Pym here?" There was no answer. The king turned to the Speaker and asked him whether the five members were there. The Speaker fell on his knees. "I have neither eyes to see," he said, "nor tongue to speak in this place, but as the House directs me."

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"Well well, said the king in a rage, 'tis no matter I think my eyes are as good as another's. I see all the birds are flown. I do expect you will send them to me as soon as they return thither."

The five members had gone to the city of London, and though Charles tried to arrest them there, he was not able to do so. And in the early summer of this year, what is known as "The Great Civil War" began.

We have no space here to tell of all the fights in this unhappy struggle, but we must say a little about the man who at last brought it to an end. This was Oliver Cromwell, one of the officers on the side of the Parliament.

He was at the head of a troop of soldiers whom he had drilled with great care. He chose only quiet, steady men who were ready to lay down their lives for what they thought to be right, and because each man wore a "back and breast" of iron, the troop came to be known as "Cromwell's Ironsides."



OLIVER CROMWELL.

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In time King Charles fell into the hands of Cromwell and the leaders of the army said that there would be no peace in the land so long as ' the tyrant ' was alive. The members of Parliament were not so hard and wished to make peace with the king.

But the generals forced them to send him to be tried, and he was taken to Westminster Hall. The trial was really a mockery, for the judges had made up their minds that the king was to die. Before passing sentence of death the judge asked the king what he had to say for his crimes against the "people of England." Then a woman in the gallery cried out, "It is a lie, not half nor one quarter of the people of England."

King Charles met his death bravely like a king and an English gentleman. He had made many mistakes in his life, but his chief mistake was in being blind to the fact that the people of this country meant to make all men, even the king, obey the laws that Parliament had made.

## THE LANDING IN TORBAY

Look at the picture on page 157. Perhaps the yellow colour of the boy's dress will help you to remember that he was Prince of Orange, though you may say that the colour is more like that of a lemon. When he became a man this prince was made King of Britain.

He was the central figure of one of the most decisive days in the whole of our history. This was the fifth day of November in the year 1688.

You can easily reckon how many years ago this was; and as for the day itself, it is the same as that of Guy Fawkes, which no British boy ever forgets.

We have had kings who tried to rule for the good of the people, and other kings who thought more of their own good. One of the latter class was King James II., who was a son of King Charles I. who was beheaded.

King James II. wore the crown for three years only, and during that short time he



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seemed to do everything which his people did not want him to do

He tried to set his own orders above the law of the land and the little you already know of history will show you that the British people will not allow this

The people are ruled by laws which are made in Parliament and to which the king gives his assent. But King James II did not like some of the laws and he made up his mind to set them aside.

So he had his orders written out on a paper which he said was to be read to all the people in all the churches of England on a certain Sunday.

Seven of the bishops heard what the king meant to do, and they begged of him not to ask the clergy to read the paper, as most of them felt that they would be doing wrong if they read it. But the king only lost his temper and said that he meant to have his own way in the matter.

The fateful Sunday came but only a small



KING WILLIAM III. AS A BOY.

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number of the clergymen read the paper, and when they began to read many of the people rose in their places and left the church.

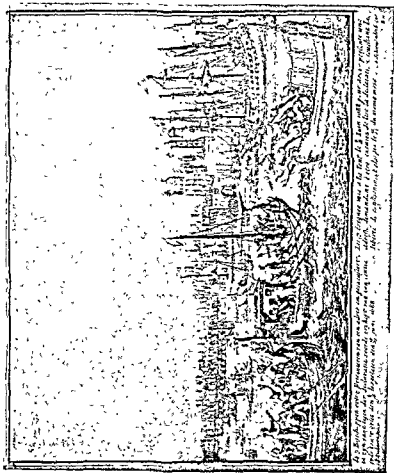
The king, of course, blamed the seven bishops for setting the people against him, and he sent his officers to take them as prisoners to the Tower of London. But the people who saw them pass on their way to the prison, called upon God to bless them as true friends of the nation.

After being kept in the Tower for a month, the bishops were brought to trial for speaking



against the king, and the people were in great anxiety as to what was going to happen to them. But the judges said that they were "not guilty" and set them free.

There was great joy in all parts of the land at this result; even the soldiers of the



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king lighted bonfires in their camp near London to show their joy at the release of the bishops

Most of the people in the country were now tired of the king and his ways of ruling the land, and a number of gentlemen made a plot against him

The Prince of Orange had married Mary, the daughter of King James, and he was the ruler of the country which we now call Holland, on the other side of the North Sea

This Prince of Orange was known to be a very brave soldier, and it was felt that he would govern England as its people wished it to be governed, if he would consent to come over with the Princess Mary and rule in her name

A message was therefore sent to him, and he set out at once with an army of his own men. He did not sail straight for London but down the English Channel, and on the day which I have already named, he landed

at Brixham in Torbay on the coast of Devon.

Meanwhile King James had heard of the plot, and his soldiers were closely watching the ports on the *east* coast of England!

The people of Devonshire and the country round about had not expected that the Prince would land in the West Country, and for a time, few people joined him. But as he marched onward, more and more men came to follow his banner.

King James came out from London to fight him, but as he went westward, his army seemed to melt away. One after another of his officers left him, and one of them tried to kidnap the king and take him as a prisoner to Prince William.

King James hurried back to London, sent off his wife and son to France, and tried to follow them himself. But he was stopped by a crowd in a Kentish village and forced back to London.

But not even Prince William himself

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wished to keep King James as a prisoner; and when he got away a second time no one tried to stop him. He took the Great Seal with him and flung it into the Thames.

Then he found a ship by which he crossed to France in the week before Christmas of that fatal year. The crown was now offered to Princess Mary, but she refused to take it unless she was to reign with her husband; and as for William, he said he would go back to Holland if he were not to have both the name and the power of a king. So it was arranged that husband and wife should rule together; but they were to rule as Parliament wished.

Thus James II. lost his crown, and the people of England showed once more that they had a right to choose for themselves a king who would rule them according to their own laws.

The exiled king tried again and again to get back his throne, but he did not succeed. There is a letter in the British Museum

written by the new king to one of his admirals, which I have copied out for you. Here it is :

WILLIAM R.

Instructions to our right trusty  
and well - beloved counsellor,  
Arthur Herbert Esq., Admiral  
and Commander of our ships  
in the Narrow Seas.

*Given at our court at Whitehall this 26th  
day of March 1689 in the first year of  
our reign.*

In case you shall take any ship or vessel in which the late King James shall happen to be, you are to treat him with respect and immediately send us an account thereof. But without expecting any further orders, you are hereby required to transport him to some port belonging to the States General of the United Provinces (Holland) and give notice of your arrival to the said States, and you are to dispose of the said King James into such persons' hands as the said States shall appoint to receive him.

W. R.

At this time King James was known to be on his way to Ireland, where he did actually land, and where he fought King William, but without success.

You will notice in this letter how gently King William writes of the king who, after all, was the father of the new Queen of England, William's own wife.



# "OUR FAR-FLUNG BATTLE-LINE"

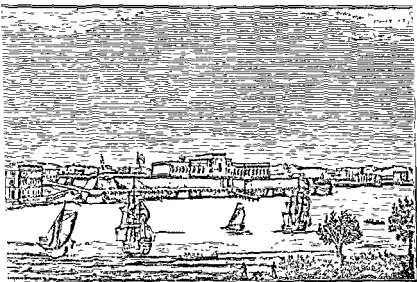
READ these lines carefully

“God of our fathers known of old ;  
 Lord of our far-flung battle-line .  
 Beneath whose awful hand we hold  
 Dominion over palm and pine ;  
 Lord God of hosts be with us yet,  
 Lest we forget, lest we forget ”

These lines sing of themselves without any music if you read them slowly and with care , and I am sure that you will not readily forget them

Let us try to find out what the poet means by the phrase “our far-flung battle-line.” You will need a map of the world or a globe to help you to understand it

Between the years 1757 and 1759, our ships and men were fighting half-way round the world, from India in the East across through Europe and the Mediterranean to Canada in the West ; and they won victory after victory all along the line.



A BRITISH TRADING STATION IN INDIA.

Now you see what is meant by our "far-flung battle-line," as it was in those days of desperate struggle. There was a fight for the right to make an Empire across the seas, and the fight was between ourselves and France in India, in Europe, and in Canada.

Our leader in India was Robert Clive, who began life as a clerk in Madras and took to fighting because he was really a born soldier and general. He was always ready to try

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things that other people could not do, and this is what makes leaders of men

At this time India was ruled by a number of native princes who were always at war with one another, and both French and British were trying to set up trading-stations in the country in order to trade and win wealth for themselves

You will readily see that in time there was bound to be a struggle between France and Britain to settle who was to be first in India, and Clive was the man who made Britain first

A certain Indian prince behaved in a very cruel manner to the British merchants and their servants who lived in Calcutta

He shut up a hundred and forty-five of these people in a small cell, which is known in history as the Black Hole of Calcutta. It was the hot season, but if you have never been out of your own country, you will have little idea of the heat of an Indian summer

The poor prisoners begged the guards to

unlock the door, or at least to go and tell the prince that before long they would all be suffocated. But they said that the prince was asleep at the moment, and that they did not dare to disturb him.

The prisoners then begged for water, but when it was brought to them in skins it was found that these were too large to be passed between the iron bars of the windows. Then the poor captives seemed to go mad with despair, and I shall not try to describe the scene which followed. Next morning only twenty-three of the prisoners were found to be alive—and one of these was a woman !

It was not long before the cruel prince was very properly punished. Clive had already fought and beaten the French and the Indian princes who took their side : and he was now known as a leader who was afraid of nothing.

He marched into the province ruled by the cruel prince and fought the great Battle of Plassey, in which he won a complete victory. After this the British stayed in the

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north of ' did not as traders only but as master and this is what makes the battle won by Clive so decisive and important.

The victory was the beginning of our hold upon India the greater part of which is now under our rule

After Plassey the French were beaten again and again At last they were forced to leave India, and its rich trade fell into the hands of the British

This was what happened at one end of our "far flung battle-line" Now let us turn to Canada at the other end.

Here the French had set up trading-places and had started to deal with the Indians, who brought them furs from the Canadian forests They had also built towns, and had a strong fort for their troops at the city of Quebec

Now the British came sailing up the river to Quebec under a young general named Wolfe, who had orders from home to take the place and hoist the British flag



A FRENCH TRAPPER IN CANADA.

But he found a strong French force posted to the east of the fortress in such a way that he could neither get near them to

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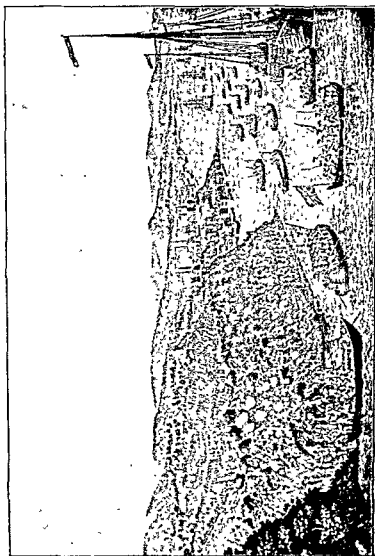
fight nor past them into the city, besides, the city stood so high on a cliff that the guns of the British ships could not reach it.

Wolfe began to think that he would never be able to obey his orders and 'take Quebec', but after thinking over the matter he made up his mind to lead his men up the face of the high cliff to the west of the city.

He waited for a dark night, and then embarked some of his men in boats which were silently rowed to the foot of a winding and very steep path that led up to the top of the cliff.

After a stiff climb they reached the top, and the French sentries were so much surprised to see them that they fired their rifles and then ran away. When day dawned Wolfe had a large force on the top of the cliff and marched towards the city.

On the broad plain before Quebec he was met by the French under General Montcalm, and in a very short time the great and decisive battle had begun.



WOLFEN MEN SCALING THE HEIGHTS OF ADDJAHAM



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Both sides fought bravely, knowing well enough that the prize of the fight was not only Quebec but Canada itself. But after a stern struggle the French were beaten and driven from the field.

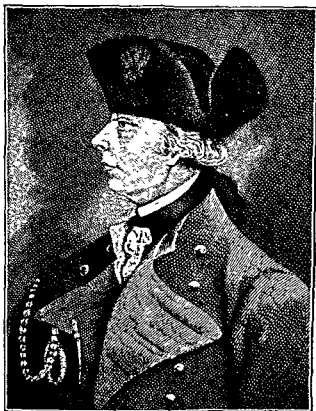
Before the end came General Wolfe was struck by a bullet and was carried off to the rear of the front line. 'Lay me down,' he said to those who carried him, and he was asked whether a surgeon should be brought.

It is needless, he said, 'for it is all over with me.'

Then one of those near him cried out, 'They run, see they run.' 'Who run?' asked Wolfe, rousing himself as if he had just been awakened from sleep. 'The enemy sir' was the reply, 'they give way everywhere.'

Wolfe at once gave orders for checking the enemy and turning on his side he added, 'Now God be praised. I shall die in peace, and in a moment he had passed away.'

The brave French general also died from



GENERAL WOLFE.

a wound. When he was told that he could not live longer than a few hours he said, "So much the better. I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec."

Meanwhile the brave British soldiers and

sailors had been winning victory after victory in Europe and in the seas round about "We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is, said a well-known English gentleman "for fear of missing one."

The French made a plan for invading England and got together a large army on the north coast ready to cross the Channel

The fleet came to take them across, but before the men were put on board the French ships Admiral Hawke came up with them

The sea was rolling high, and the coast off which the French ships lay was so full of shoals and rocks that the pilot told Hawke he ran great danger in making an attack

"You have done your duty in telling me this," said the brave sailor "Now lay me alongside the French flag-ship"

Then the battle of Quiberon Bay began, and when it was over there was no more talk of a French invasion of England—not at least, until the time of Napoleon, but that is a story for our next chapter



## THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON

ABOUT a hundred years ago when a nurse wished to quieten a crying child she would say, "Hush, hush! or Boney will get you."

When I was a small boy we used to play a game in which we sang:

"The Emperor Napoleon had a hundred  
thousand men,  
As we go marching along."

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You may ask what these foolish things have to do with history and I reply, "More than you may think."

For history tells us a great deal about the Emperor Napoleon, whose second name was Bonaparte from which the nurse got the nickname of Bonev. And it was a common thing for him to lead an army of a hundred thousand men.

But why should the nurse try to frighten the child with his name? Because at one time he said he would come over from France with his soldiers and take London. Let us learn a little about this terrible man.

He did not belong to the royal family of France, but was the son of an officer and was born poor. When he went to a school for young officers he was not liked by his school fellows, for he was a sulky boy, and, too fond of taking walks by himself.

But if the snow fell heavily he became the leader of them all. For he knew better

than any one else how to arrange a mimic battle. He was indeed a born general.

He was quite a young man when he began to fight for France, and he soon showed that he was going to be a very famous general. Again and again he led his men to victory, and when the rulers of France fell out among themselves he became master of the ~~Entry~~.

"also one could stand up against him; for he had the army at his back, and all the ~~tyr~~ners loved him. In a few years he made himself Emperor, and he began to lead the French armies into other countries; for he had made up his mind to be master of the whole of Europe.

He did, indeed, win much success in nearly all the countries of Europe; but we cannot follow him in these great wars. We can only see how he dealt with England, and how she dealt with him.

He made up his mind to cross the Channel and invade England, so he sent an army of

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more than "a hundred thousand men" to the north coast of France

He set up his own camp at a place from which he could see the white cliffs of England on a clear day. "The Channel is only a ditch," he said, "and any one can cross it who has the courage to try."

So he waited and watched. A fog might come and allow his flat-bottomed boat to slip across unseen. Or a strong wind might drive away the English fleet which sat in the Channel and give him the twenty-four hours which was all the time he required.

He spent the time of waiting in fitting up his boats, and in training his men to go on board with great speed. When the signal was given they were not to lose a moment.

So confident was Napoleon that he could take London that he had a medal prepared to celebrate the great event: and you can see a picture of it on the next page.

In our country every man who was not old or sick offered himself to fight the French





the Channel, Nelson must first be got out of the way.

So the Emperor made a plan. He told some of his chief captains to sail away across the Atlantic Ocean right away from England; he did this, it is said, to entice Nelson to follow them, and the English Admiral did so.

When they got to the other side of the ocean the French turned quickly back and made all haste home again. Nelson had lost sight of them at first, but he soon caught up with them and was back as soon as they were.

But even yet that signal to cross the Channel had not been given; for the ships which were to protect the French soldiers in their crossing had been checked by another brave British captain.

After this Napoleon gave up the plan of invading England. At last he sent a signal to his waiting army, but it was to tell them to leave their camp on the coast and follow him across the Continent.



ADMIRAL LORD NELSON.

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But before he left, he sent a letter to his chief sea-captain telling him that he was a coward, and that he had spoilt his plans for invading England

### A GREAT SEA-FIGHT

IN a glass case in the British Museum there is a small wooden box with a brass plate upon it on which are engraved the following words

VICTORY—TRAFALGAR.

OCT 21, 1805

On a card beneath this box we read that it was "made from a splinter of the *Victory*, knocked off by a shot in the Battle of Trafalgar, containing a portion of Nelson's hair"

I have seen many people look at this small box, and more than once I have seen gentlemen take off their hats, as they read the words engraved on the plate One of these was a Frenchman!

You see the Battle of Trafalgar was one of the most decisive days in the whole of our history; and Nelson gave his life in winning this great victory.

Nelson had two fleets to fight at Trafalgar; for the ships of Spain had joined those of France, making a great fleet of thirty-three vessels. The British fleet numbered twenty-seven ships.

The great fight took place off Cape Trafalgar, on the south coast of Spain. The date given above was a Monday, and the morning broke with a cloudless sky, and a light breeze rippling the surface of the deep blue sea.

Nelson was early on the deck of his ship, dressed in his admiral's frock-coat, with four stars on his left breast; but he forgot his sword that morning, having left it lying on his cabin table.

He divided his fleet into two portions, and kept the smaller number of ships for himself. As the British ships moved on towards the foe,

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Nelson went from gun to gun to speak a cheery word to his men. They were all stripped to the waist, with handkerchiefs ready to bind over their ears as soon as the firing began.

The men stood to attention and tugged their forelocks when Nelson came along, and they seemed to be grimly pleased at the thought of battle. The bands played "Hearts of Oak" and other stirring airs.

At eleven o'clock an officer went to Nelson's cabin and found him on his knees. He was writing with his left hand, for he had lost the right arm in a previous fight, a prayer which began

' May the great God whom I worship grant to my Country and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory, and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it '

Nelson, at least, was quite sure that this Trafalgar Day was going to be a decisive day in British history.

to my Country and for  
the benefit of Europe  
in general a great and  
glorious Victory, and may  
no misconduct in any  
one tarnish it and  
may humanity after  
Victory be the predomi-  
nant feature in the  
British fleet, for  
myself individually  
I commit my life  
to him who made

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After writing this prayer, he went on deck and gave orders for certain signals to be made. "I wish to say to my men," he said to the signaller "ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY."

The signal was at once given to the fleet in a manner which every Boy Scout now understands. It was greeted with loud cheers from every ship. Nelson then ordered the signal for "Close Action" to be given, and not long afterwards the great struggle began.

We have not space to follow the details of that brave battle, in which the men of both sides fought like heroes. Let us take a peep into the "log" or report book of the *Victory*. Here is an extract:

*"Firing continued until 4.30 p.m. when a victory having been reported to the Right Honourable Viscount Nelson he then died of his wound"*

He was walking on the deck with Captain

Hardy, when a rifle-ball struck his shoulder and he fell forward on his face. "They have done for me at last, Hardy," he said.

"I hope not," was the reply. "Yes," said Nelson, "my backbone is shot through."

He was carried below and laid upon a bed, where he was examined by the surgeon, who saw at once that he would die of his wound; but he did not say so.

The dying man asked again and again for Hardy, but the captain had his duties on deck, and it was an hour before he could come.

They shook hands, and Lord Nelson said, "Well, Hardy, how goes the battle? How goes the day with us?"

"Very well, my Lord," said Hardy; "we have got twelve or fourteen of the enemy's ships."

"I hope," said his Lordship, "none of our ships have struck, Hardy."

"No, my Lord," was the reply, "there is no fear of that."

Nelson then said, "I am a dead man,



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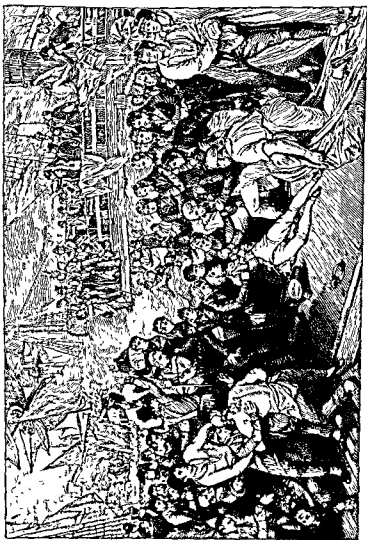
Hardy I am going fast It will be all over with me soon

Captain Hardy then went on deck, and the surgeon told Nelson that he was dying 'I know it' said the hero Then he told the surgeon to spend no more time on him but to do what he could for the rest of the wounded

When Hardy came down again he told his dying chief that fourteen or fifteen of the enemy had struck their flags 'That is well,' said Nelson 'but I bargained for twenty

Then he gave Hardy orders to anchor, but before he went on deck again the captain stooped and kissed his cheek "Now I am satisfied," said Nelson 'Thank God, I have done my duty

These words were the last our hero spoke His work was done So far as the sea was concerned, the power of the French was broken Ten years later a great land battle might the career of Napoleon Bonaparte to



THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

a close. We shall read about this great fight in our next chapter.

I saw to day in the old royal palace of Whitehall a portion of the main mast of the *Victory*. It stands about ten feet high and is quite four feet thick, and right through the middle of it is a large hole all torn and scorched at the sides.

I am sure that I do not need to tell you how this hole was made.

This portion of the mast was once kept in the grounds of a large house near London where King William IV used to stay. While it was there, a pair of robins made their nest in the shot hole and brought up a brood of young ones.

And the little family of robins were great favourites of the King and Queen Adelaide, who used to feed them with their own hands. I think that Nelson would have loved those robins too.

## THE IRON DUKE

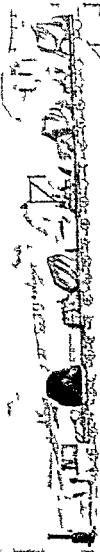
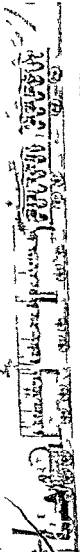
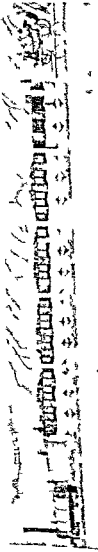
YESTERDAY was the 18th of June and the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. The day of the fight was a Sunday, and the bells were ringing for church in England while her brave soldiers were fighting for her in Belgium on the other side of the North Sea.

Do you know that a pair of boots which come up to the knees are called wellingtons ; and that a pair of boots which come only over the ankles are called bluchers ?

If you did not know that before, you know now ; and I have helped you in this strange way to remember who won the Battle of Waterloo—Wellington, the British general, and Blucher, the Prussian general.

After all, the strength of an army depends very greatly upon its boots !

About the time when Nelson was fighting the French on the sea Wellington was driving them out of Spain ; for the Emperor Napoleon had made his own brother King of Spain, and



ONE OF THE FIRST RAILWAY TRAINS SHOWING (1) FIRST CLASS ( ) SECOND CLASS  
A OO S TRAIN (4) A CATTLE TRAIN

the people of that country had asked us to help to drive him away.

There was much bloodshed during this war, and our soldiers won many victories of which the British army is still very proud.

Only the other day I was watching the



MEDAL STRUCK IN MEMORY OF WELLINGTON'S BATTLES IN SPAIN.

king pass through London to open Parliament; and I stood behind a soldier who held a flag on which the names of some of these battles in Spain were worked in gold.

So I took off my hat to the memory of Wellington and his brave British boys.

Wellington drove the French out of Spain and followed them into France. When he was

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on the march to Paris news was brought to him that Napoleon was no longer Emperor.

He had been sent away to a little island called Elba near the coast of Italy, and it was thought that there would now be rest and peace in all the lands.

But in less than a year Napoleon made his escape and landed in France, where he soon had an army at his back ready to go wherever he might lead them. The very troops sent to make him prisoner went over to his side; so great was his hold upon men who loved the "glory" of war.

In a few weeks he marched into Belgium, where he had to face the British under Wellington, and the Prussians under Blucher. Here there was really a long drawn-out battle of three days which ended with the French defeat at Waterloo.

Napoleon might have led an army of three times "a hundred thousand men," but he picked only the men whom he had trained to fight; and he had among them a large body



MAJOR GENERAL WELLESLEY,  
AFTERWARDS DUKE OF WELLINGTON.



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of splendid horsemen. Among the British and Prussian armies was a large number of young boys who had never faced an enemy before.

Wellington had 70 000 men, about half as many as Napoleon, but he hoped to beat him when the Prussians came up to his aid. So he did not begin the battle, he formed up his men so that they could stand firmly against the attack of the French.

Again and again the troops of Napoleon tried to drive the British soldiers from their ground, but our brave boys stood like rocks and could not be moved. They were formed in squares, on each side of which was a double line of gleaming bayonets, and as soon as one man fell another stepped into his place.

At last Napoleon sent against them the splendid horsemen who were known as the Old Guard, and who had won many fights for their great general.

But even these dashing horse soldiers could not break the British squares. Again and



ON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

again they came on with thundering hoofs and flashing swords ; but again and again they fell back, and at last they gave up a task which was clearly too hard for them.

This was late in the afternoon, when, it is

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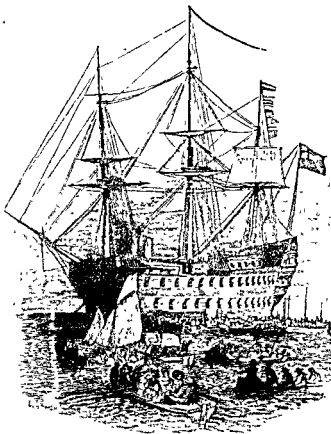
said, Wellington was eagerly wishing that "either night or Blucher would come"

He felt sure that when the brave old Prussian whom his men called "Marshal Forwards" came up with his soldiers the French could be driven from the field

At last Blucher came, and the British saw his men pressing the French on the right. Then Wellington gave the order for those squares to be broken and an advance to be made, and British and Prussians together drove the foe before them and won the great victory

It was dearly bought. During the fight about half of a "hundred thousand men" fell to rise no more. But there were more killed on the French side than among the British and Prussians

For what did these brave British and Prussians die? To set Europe free from the war spirit and the love of bloodshed which had been used by Napoleon to win for himself and France what is falsely called "glory."



THE BRITISH WARSHIP IN WHICH NAPOLEON  
TOOK REFUGE

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After Waterloo his days of fighting were over. He made his escape from the field of battle and gave himself up to the captain of a British man-of-war. He was sent away as a prisoner to a lonely island called St. Helena, far out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, and here he spent the last six years of his life.

Since that time French and British have fought side by side but never against each other, and we all hope that they never will.



CAPTURED FRENCH EAGLE.

## ON GETTING ABOUT

HAVE you ever heard of Robinson Crusoe? He does not exactly come into history, for he is the hero of a famous story-book which you must all read some day, if you have not already done so.

This story tells us how he was shipwrecked and cast upon a desert island, where he had to make almost everything he needed for himself.

And one of the hardest tasks of all was to make a wheel.

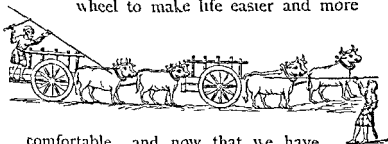
When you come to think of it, the man who made the first wheel was a very great man indeed, and whoever he was, he ought to have a monument which could never be destroyed. For the wheel is one of the most useful things in life, as you will see if you try to imagine what life would be without it.

It would be great fun to follow the rolling wheel through history and see what use the

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various nations have made of it, but I have not space enough in this book to do that. You may however ask yourselves, "If some wicked demon broke all the wheels to-night, where should we be in the morning?"

It was quite late in our history before we began to see what could be done with the wheel to make life easier and more



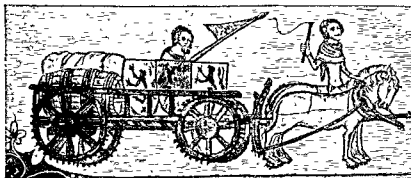
comfortable, and now that we have found this out, we make almost everything go by wheels

Nearly a thousand years ago the English farm workers used carts like that in the first picture. The wheel of a cart like this has a broad rim, an axle, and twelve spokes; but spokes were used by the Romans *two thousand years ago*.

You see the Romans were great travellers,

and very good at making roads; and it was not long before they made strong carts to go along these roads.

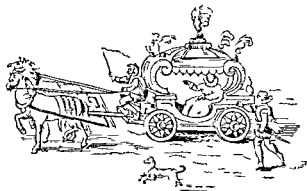
And the people of Old Britain learnt from them how to make wheels with spokes; before that, they had made their wheels of



flat boards put together and then cut round; and I do not think you would have enjoyed a ride in one of their carts.

The next picture shows a cart of six hundred years ago. Can you tell why the rims of these wheels have been fitted with cogs? You will see that the shoes of the horses are also provided with spikes.



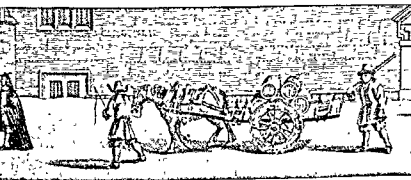


The coach of Queen Elizabeth is shown in the next picture. Here we have very fine wheels indeed, for the spokes have been made of an ornamental shape.

But there are no springs above these wheels, and I am afraid that the poor queen would go bumpity-bump as she was drawn along.

The cart in the next picture is very rough indeed, and the wheel looks like one of those used in Old Britain. But the picture shows a street in Oxford only 250 years ago.

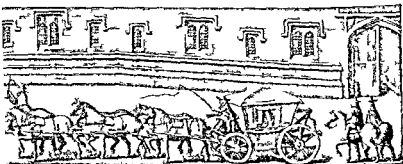
The barrels on the cart hold wine, and there is some fear that the young men of the



colleges may take them without leave. So they are guarded with care as they are taken through the streets.

The next picture shows how a rich person would travel in the country about two hundred years ago. There are no springs above these wheels. You may say that six strong horses are not really needed to draw this coach; but the roads at this time were very bad indeed, and all these horses may be necessary to drag the coach out of the deep ruts in the road.

So bad were the roads that men would, as a rule, travel on horseback. Goods were also sent from place to place on the backs of pack-

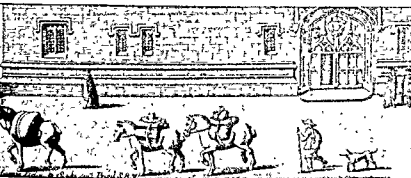


horses like those in another picture on page 207

About two hundred years ago a great event in the history of the wheel took place. A coach was driven from Oxford to London in one day. It started at six in the morning and reached London at seven in the evening (A few weeks ago I went from London to Oxford in less than two hours!)

After this great event coaches began to run over longer distances. And because they performed a run in stages they were called stage coaches.

It took one of these coaches four long days to go from York to London. We can now go



in four hours by a fast train making two or three stops.

The York coach ran through Stamford and Huntingdon; at night the travellers had to put up at an inn.

There were not many travellers in those days. It was only on a fine day in summer that the journey could be really enjoyed, and only by the young and strong.

In winter people would not travel unless they were forced to do so. The roads were then in a dreadful state, and there was also the danger of being robbed by highwaymen.

As I write these words, I can look out from my window across a part of Hampstead

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Heath In the days of the stage-coach there used to be robbers on this heath. They would hide behind the trees by the roadside, and when a coach came along they would threaten to shoot the driver if he did not stop.

When he did stop they would rob the passengers of all the money they had about them, and then ride swiftly away on their fine, strong horses. The people in the coach were as a rule too frightened to show fight.

If the king's officers caught these robbers, they would take them to prison; and many of them were hanged.

Stories have been told of these highway-men which make them out to be heroes; but they were nothing of the kind.

They were very bold and daring and so won a certain amount of admiration; but they were really great blackguards who well deserved all they got when they were caught.

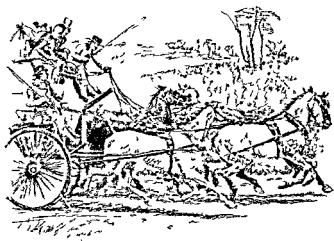
Some of them were men of good birth and education, and for these there was less excuse than for others.



THE STAGE-COACH IN A SNOW-DRIFT.

Lord Nelson lived in the days of the stage coach, and he would travel in this way when he went up to London from his home in Norfolk. He would perhaps catch the York

coach at Stamford; and when he went to fight the great Battle of Trafalgar he would probably go from London by coach to Portsmouth. In our next chapter we shall read something about the man who made wheels more useful in daily life than they had ever been before.



RACING THE MAIL-COACH.

## THE FIRST RAILWAY TRAIN

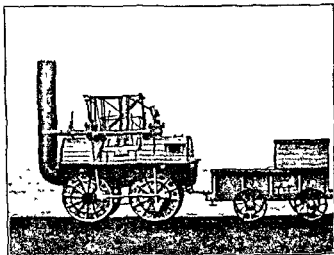
ALL boys, and most jolly girls, like to look at a big railway engine. It is so strong and yet so gentle, so clean and tidy, so obedient to the driver's will ; and it looks so noble as it leaves the station riding on a white cloud of steam.

You can see one of the first railway engines in the great railway station at Darlington. It stands not far from the place where the great express engines draw up, which have come from London or Aberdeen.

It is interesting to look at the two engines side by side. The first engine looks rather like a big tar-kettle, such as you see when a road is being made or mended ; but all the same, it is the ancestor of the splendid express engine of to-day.

And I think you will agree with me that the day on which the first railway journey was made was one of the decisive days in British history.





STEPHENSON'S FIRST PASSENGER ENGINE. 'LOCOMOTION'

Let us learn something about it; and you will see, as the story goes on, why this early engine is now kept with great care in the railway station at Darlington.

It was all owing to George Stephenson, who was born at Wylam-on-Tyne in Northumberland, in the year 1781. This is a date which every boy who loves railway engines ought never to forget.

George Stephenson was a poor boy, for his

father was only a worker at a pit, and he could not send his boy to school.

Before his cottage door ran a pair of wooden rails. Upon these rails coal waggons were drawn by horses; and when George was a boy his duty was to keep his little brothers and sisters off these rails; so that we may almost say that he was born and bred on a railway.

When he grew older he went to work on a farm and made *fourpence* a day. Then he worked at a pit where his duty was to fire the engine.

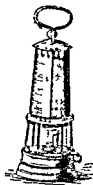
It was a great pleasure to him to watch the engine, for he had always loved to find out how things worked. As a little boy he had made clay models of engines with straws for pipes, and when he grew older he was very good at taking a clock to pieces, cleaning the parts, and putting them together again.

But, of course, he could never hope to make his way if he did not learn to read and write. So when he was quite a young man

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he went to a night school to learn the simple things which you were taught some years ago

After this, he began to try his hand at inventing, and one of his first things he made was a safety-lamp which could be used



to give light in the pit, which, as you know, is full of gas from the coal

Then he made a better kind of iron rail for wag-

gons to run upon Last of all, he built the engine which would run on these rails

He did not make the first moving engines But he made the first one which would run well on rails, and this was only done after many years of careful work, and many trials and failures

The first railway line to be opened was

laid between Stockton and Darlington. And we may say that this opening day was the birthday of railway travelling. It was the

27th SEPTEMBER 1825.

A great crowd of people came to see the first railway train. Many came to wonder, and others came to scoff; not a few were hoping that the train would break down, or that the engine would refuse to move.

George Stephenson himself drove the engine. The first part of the train was made up of six waggons loaded with coals and flour. Then came a coach for the owners of the railway, twenty-one open waggons for passengers, and six waggon-loads of coal.

"The signal being given," writes one who saw the first train, "the engine started off with this long train, and such was its great speed that now and again it went along at 12 miles an hour!"

So the railway began. Now read the words that Stephenson spoke to his son at

this time, and tell me if they have come true.

"I think you will live to see the day when railways will be used all over the land, when mail-coaches will go by railway as well as the king and all his people.

"The time will come when it will be cheaper for a working man to travel by railway than to go on foot."

You say, "Why, of course?" But when Stephenson spoke words like these many people laughed at him.

Yet he went on with his work, and before he died, he himself helped to lay railways in many parts of the land; and his engines were made better and better as the years went by.



## "THE WHINING SCHOOL-BOY"

OUR greatest poet, William Shakespeare, who lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth, speaks in one of his poems of

"The whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school."

Of course in those days the schoolboy had something to whine about. He learnt little else than grammar, and that is not a very pleasant subject as a rule. And if he did not do his lessons with care, he was birched without any mercy.

There was a man named John Colet living about this time who loved children very dearly, and who wished to see them taught in a better manner. So he started a school in London, known as St. Paul's School, and above the master's chair he placed an image of the Child Jesus with the words carved beneath the image, "Hear ye Him."



JOHN COLET DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S

And one day he wrote to his children  
 Lift up your little white hands for me—for  
 me which prayeth for you to God But  
 even this kind-hearted man could only think

of making the grammars rather more interesting!

Of course children were taught to read and write, but only that they might be able to do their grammar better; and it was not English but Latin grammar. It is not surprising that the school-boys whined.

Of course as a rule, only the children of the well-to-do could be sent to school; but many poor scholars were taught for nothing, and a rich man would often pay for a poor boy to be sent to school.

But the children of the very poorest would not get this chance. As soon as they were able they had to go to work. It was three hundred years before any great change was made in these matters. And because boys and girls grew up without knowledge, many of them grew up very wicked; and the prisons were filled with them.

Then came the time of the good Queen Victoria, who was grieved that children should grow up without the knowledge





IN SCHOOL TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO

which would help them to know good from evil

There were at this time however many schools of the kind shown in the picture on page 222 They were known as dame's schools because they were kept by old ladies, and some of them were quite good

If you have read that jolly tale *The Water Babies* you will remember a descrip-

tion of a dame's school, and it is quite correct although it is in a story. Here it is :

" And a neat pretty cottage it was, with clipped yew hedges all round the garden. . . . Tom came slowly up to the open door which was all hung round with clematis and roses ; and then peeped in, half afraid.

" And there sat by the empty fire-place, which was filled with a pot of sweet herbs, the nicest old woman that ever was seen. At her feet sat the grandfather of all the cats ; and opposite her sat, on two benches, twelve or fourteen neat, rosy, chubby, little children, learning their Chris-cross-row ; and gabble enough they made about it.

" Such a pleasant cottage it was, with a shiny, clean, stone floor, and curious old prints on the walls, and a cuckoo clock in the corner, which began shouting as soon as Tom appeared."

But kind though they were, the old dames did not know much about teaching. And



A DAVID'S SCHOOL OF FIFTY YEARS A O

after all, they could only teach a few of the boys and girls in the land. So it was decided to open more schools of a better kind, and to train teachers to work in them.

Money was needed for this, and some of it was given by rich men who had a good deal to spare; and more was given by Parliament from the money which was collected as taxes.

But even this did not provide for all the boys and girls who wished to be taught. Still, things were much better than they had been, and these new "national" schools as they were called did splendid work.

They did such good work, indeed, that people began to say that Parliament ought to set up schools like them for all the boys and girls in the land. It would help to empty the prisons, said some of them, and they were quite right.

So in the year 1870 Parliament passed a law that every boy and girl must learn to read and write. Of course money was provided for setting up the schools, and in time there

## 224 The Progress to History

was room for all And the schools of to-day  
are splendid places to which every boy and  
girl worthy the name of Briton is only too  
eager to go

There ought to be no longer any

“ whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school ’

24672

THE END

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